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### EDITORIAL

Editor: Mike Forbes  
Email: vr.ed@kelsey.co.uk  
Art Editor: Rob Terry - rob@focusedondesign.co.uk

### ADVERTISEMENT SALES

Talk Media Sales  
01732 445325  
vr.ads@kelsey.co.uk

### Production Supervisor:

Kylie Woolgar 01733 353396  
kylie.woolgar@kelsey.co.uk  
Production Manager:  
Charlotte Whittaker

### MANAGEMENT

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Vintage Roadscene is published on the third Friday of  
each month preceding the cover date.

### 6 Control Units

Ron Henderson tells us about a type of  
vehicle which appeared during World War II  
and developed from there.

### 10 Land Rover - the Origin of the Species

Norman Chapman looks at some lesser-  
known facts from the early years of  
development of this seen everywhere.

### 16 Fruit and Veg in Leicester

Colin Chesterman brings us some  
interesting pictures showing the changes  
at Leicester Fruit Market over the years.

### 22 The Original Scammell Trunker

Some official pictures from Phil Moth  
prompted the editor to look for details of  
this fascinating vehicle.

### 27 An Early Art Form Rediscovered

Chris Salaman looks back at the lovely  
cover illustrations on some little books we  
all remember from our formative years.

### 28 Publish and be Damned - Part 2 -

#### Taking on the Big Boys

Malcolm Bates looks at some of the less  
well-remembered transport periodicals of  
the past.

### 34 Scenes Past - Laundry Vans

Mike Forbes brings us some pictures from  
the Chris Hodge 'Stilltime' Collection,  
featuring a type of delivery vehicle which  
tends to go unnoticed and is becoming  
rare these days....

### 41 More Memories from Grimsby

Ray Newcomb has sent us some more  
assorted memories, mainly from Grimsby  
and its immediate area,  
but with some interest further afield.

### 48 Salopia Saloon Coaches

Alan Price relates the history of a  
well-remembered coach operator based in  
Shropshire.

### 54 The Ards TT Circuit

Peter Johnston has researched the  
background to a picture in a previous  
issue...

### 56 Rally Scene

Jim King, Keith Baldwin, Barry Fenn  
and the editor report from events at  
Detling, Kirkby Stephen, Chatham and  
Jack's Cafe.

### 64 Rally Diary

Our monthly guide to Great Ideas for Great  
Days Out.

### 66 Scene & Heard

Your letters commenting on recent articles  
and much more...

### 73 Next Month

what's in store next time...

### 74 Tailscene - Up the Revolution -

#### some 1930s Adverts

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more ways than one.

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**W**elcome to another issue. I'm writing this having just got back from this year's London to Brighton run, organised by the Historic Commercial Vehicle Society. The Spring Bank Holiday and its events were not blessed with the best of weather, but it was worth getting wet and cold to see all those splendid old vehicles making their way from Crystal Palace to Madeira Drive.

We'll be bringing you a full report of our 'boys' day out' in the next issue. There were lots of noteworthy entrants on the run, but a couple of this year's debutantes offered a contrast on which it's hard not to feel the need to comment here.

The first is a wonderful 1935 Dennis 40-45 cwt dropside lorry, RV 7843, which is still substantially in the condition it was in when discovered as what the classic car boys call a 'barn find' last year. First registered by Sparshatts of Portsmouth, from 1949 it was used by J Coles of Shrewton, Wiltshire for hay and straw haulage through the 1950s and '60s. When the business was closed in 1973 and the yard sold for building, the Dennis was sold along with some tractors, but lay dormant until last year.

The second vehicle new to the London to Brighton run has been seen before, but is worthy of comment for the opposite reasons to the Dennis. This was the 1959 Leyland Beaver, 665 MTB, and box van trailer, in Tesco livery. It was commissioned as a replica of a Tesco vehicle by the late William Hunter, of Tarleton, near Preston, to celebrate 40 years of his company, Huntpac, supplying Tesco with fresh produce. The Hunter family are maintaining his impressive fleet of preserved lorries.

The Leyland was originally used by Lancashire County Council with a low-loader trailer, moving plant, and was first preserved in that guise and later in the livery of Smiths of Eccles. This is typical of a number of preserved lorries, which having been restored, either in their original livery or in the colours of their rescuer, have changed colours when they later changed hands in preservation.



Once a vehicle has been rebuilt or restored, it is obviously up to the restorer what colours he puts on his vehicle. It is, after all, his property to do with as he wishes and, in the majority of cases, it is only a matter of a coat of paint. There have been a few instances, for example, of a rigid being shortened and converted to a tractor unit and, as long as it is not a unique vehicle, again that's fair enough. It's still there for us all to enjoy, representing a part of our transport heritage.

It would perhaps be a bit different if the vehicle was originally with a well-known fleet, like British Road Services, Pickfords, Tate & Lyle, Shell-mex & BP and so on, or a well-respected user of second-hand lorries, – Spiers of Melksham and Killingbeck come to mind – in which case finishing it in Bloggs & Co colours, especially if this was a fictitious livery, would be rather sad. But let's be honest, imagine having your own name on the headboard, how tempting...

There are a number of fleet operators who have a restored fleet representing vehicles they used to run – or would have liked to run, and most impressive they are, too. I suspect that within a couple of issue's time, we can look forward to showing new additions to the fleets of Tony Knowles and others...

The trailer for the Tesco Leyland, as discussed in our sister magazine, *Classic & Vintage Commercials*, is actually something like 80% brand new, with an all-new body on restored running gear, which is impressive in itself.

On the other hand, there are half a dozen or so lorries on the rally circuit which have not been restored, just wiped over with an oily rag, the mechanics having been brought up to scratch to make the vehicles roadworthy, of which the Dennis here is the latest to appear. We can only hope these vehicle will be allowed to remain in their original and most interesting state...

After all, whether it's something we should be proud of or not, these wonderfully scruffy lorries are closer in condition to many of the vehicles seen in some of our archive pictures, than lovely pristine restorations.

You can accuse me of sitting on the fence if you like, but I can see the merits of total restoration, whether to original condition, or the current owner's livery, as well as keeping that 'patina' of age and use. Let us know what you think...



## ON THE COVER...



No it's not an ice cream van, that's a subject for another issue, this month we are looking at laundry vans in our Scenes Past feature. This Commer BF 30 cwt, with a stylish coachbuilt body, offering increased internal height, as well as the more streamlined look, was fleet no 25, SYF 631 (London, 1956), of the White Knight Laundry, in Kensal Road, W10, and was photographed parked outside the company's premises. (CHC aaz054)



# CONTROL UNITS

*Ron Henderson looks at the development of these special vehicles from World War II onwards.*

**F**ire service control units, like those of the other emergency services, are examples of emergency vehicles which are seldom seen, as they usually only turn out during serious or prolonged incidents, which are thankfully not too prevalent in the United Kingdom.

It was not until World War II and the air raids on London and later the provincial cities, that the need for a fire ground incident command centre was determined. Prior to this, there were over 1,000 separate fire authorities in England and no laid down requirement to assist neighbouring fire brigades, other than on a fee-paying basis. This meant the opportunities for fire engines from several brigades attending the same fire were few and far between.

Then, during World War II and its severe air raids, supporting units from brigades many miles away were often called to support hard-pressed crews but, on many occasions, the supporting crews would stop at the first fire they came to, rather than the one to which they were originally assigned.

In addition, fire officers in charge of large fires had no idea where supporting fire engines were coming from or where they parked on arrival. Some form of coordination was urgently required, which would allow fire officers to keep track of the resources they had. The most

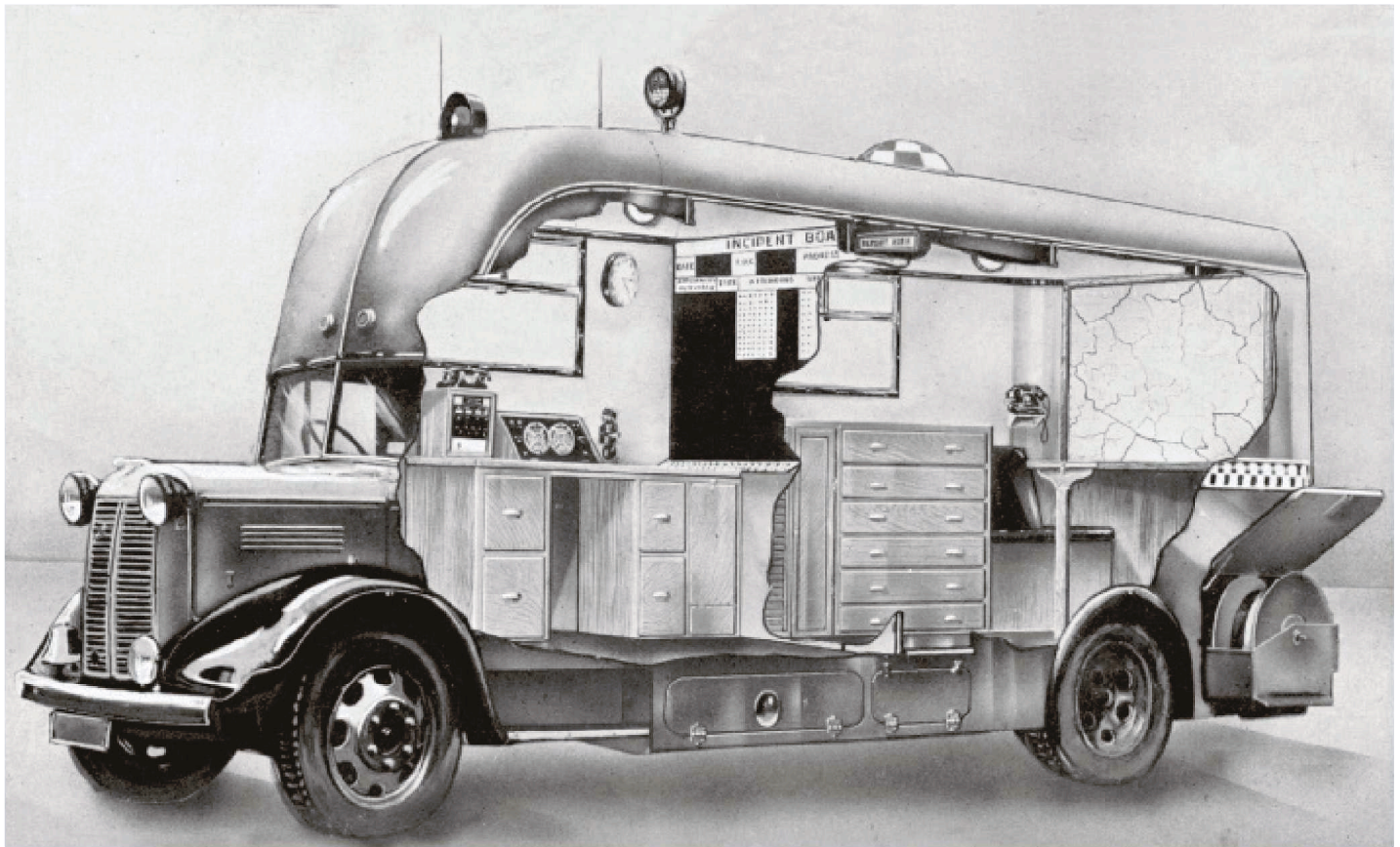


**Above:** A wartime scene in London, showing Merryweather and German-built Magirus turntable ladders in use as water towers, with another Merryweather ladder preparing to get to work. On the right is a Heavy Pump Unit, engaged in pumping water, as well as acting as the control point. In those pre-radio days a dispatch rider with motor-cycle was waiting to relay messages back to the base control.



**Left:** There is no mistaking the function of this mobile 'chess board', attached to an Austin K2 towing vehicle, during a regional training exercise in Leeds in the early 1950s. The ladder on the top suggests that this was a hasty and temporary adaptation of an existing fire engine, as there was no need for control units to carry ladder equipment.





**Above:** The first new post-war coachbuilt control unit was fabricated in-house by Durham County Fire Brigade's workshops staff, using the chassis from a wartime National Fire Service Austin K4 dropside lorry. As well as radio telephones, it also had field telephone equipment and what would become the standard illuminated red and white chequered dome on the roof. This vehicle was in service for 22 years, attending all of the major fires in the County of Durham and is still extant in the North-east of England.



**Above:** Following the conversion of a National Fire Service Fordson 7V mobile kitchen, London Fire Brigade acquired this Leyland Cub/Park Royal coach, formerly used on the 'Interstation' service, which was converted to a control vehicle. A second one was used as a personnel carrier. This control unit was later replaced by another bus conversion, this time an ex-Bristol Tramways Bristol single deck bus. (The late Alan Bachelor)

**Right:** As well as the renowned Green Goddess fire engines, the Auxiliary Fire Service mobile column detail also included a control unit, of which both 4x2 and 4x4 versions were commissioned, based on Bedford 'S' or 'RL' Type chassis. Fortunately, they were never used in anger and after the AFS was disbanded in 1968, several of the AFS control units were re-commissioned by local authority fire brigades. (J Thompson collection)



appropriate method was a mobile vehicle with communication equipment and status boards, which could be easily recognised and on which incoming appliances could converge, report their arrival and, in turn, be directed to undertake appropriate fire fighting tasks.

The senior officer of the brigade area in which the fire occurred remained in charge of the incident, regardless of the ranks of officers on supporting appliances. As a focal point of these formative mobile control posts or control units, all based on rudimentary conversions of requisitioned vehicles, red and white chequered panels became the nationally-recognised symbols of fire service control units, which still holds true to this day.





**Above:** Britain's Civil Defence Corps was disbanded at the same time as the AFS, which released Signal Units like this Thames ET6 for sale at auction. Several of these were bought by local authority fire brigades, for use as control units. This Northumberland unit was fitted out and manned by agents from the ambulance, fire and police services, but assigned to the fire brigade, as this was the organisation more able to provide a driver at short notice.

Initially a large chequered flag was flown from a portable mast on the control vehicle or fastened to the side but, when the nationalised fire brigades returned to local authority control in peacetime, a chequered band surrounding the vehicle at waistline or roof level, or an illuminating red and white chequered dome became the recognised insignia.

The concept continued in peacetime, following the return of fire brigades to local authority control and the formation of large

county-wide fire authorities. However, the priority for fire brigades was initially the replacement of pumping appliances and those brigades that determined to feature a control unit in their fleet had plenty of redundant wartime standard vehicles to adopt.

The Austin K2 towing vehicle was a popular choice as was the Mobile Kitchen, and it was the latter which Liverpool, Glasgow and London Fire Brigades adapted for control unit duties. It was some years before purpose-built

units could be commissioned and, even then, it was only the larger county borough and county fire brigades that included one in their fleets.

There was no regulation regarding standard designs for control units and thus a whole multitude of designs originated, ranging from small vans and minibuses to large coach conversions, trailers, articulated units and combination units. Part two will describe the coachbuilt examples of fire service control units.



**Above:** Built in 1965, this Commer BF 25 cwt-based Civil Defence Corps ambulance only had two years of service, before the organisation was disbanded, but it gained a second career with Hampshire Fire Service as the brigade's control unit.





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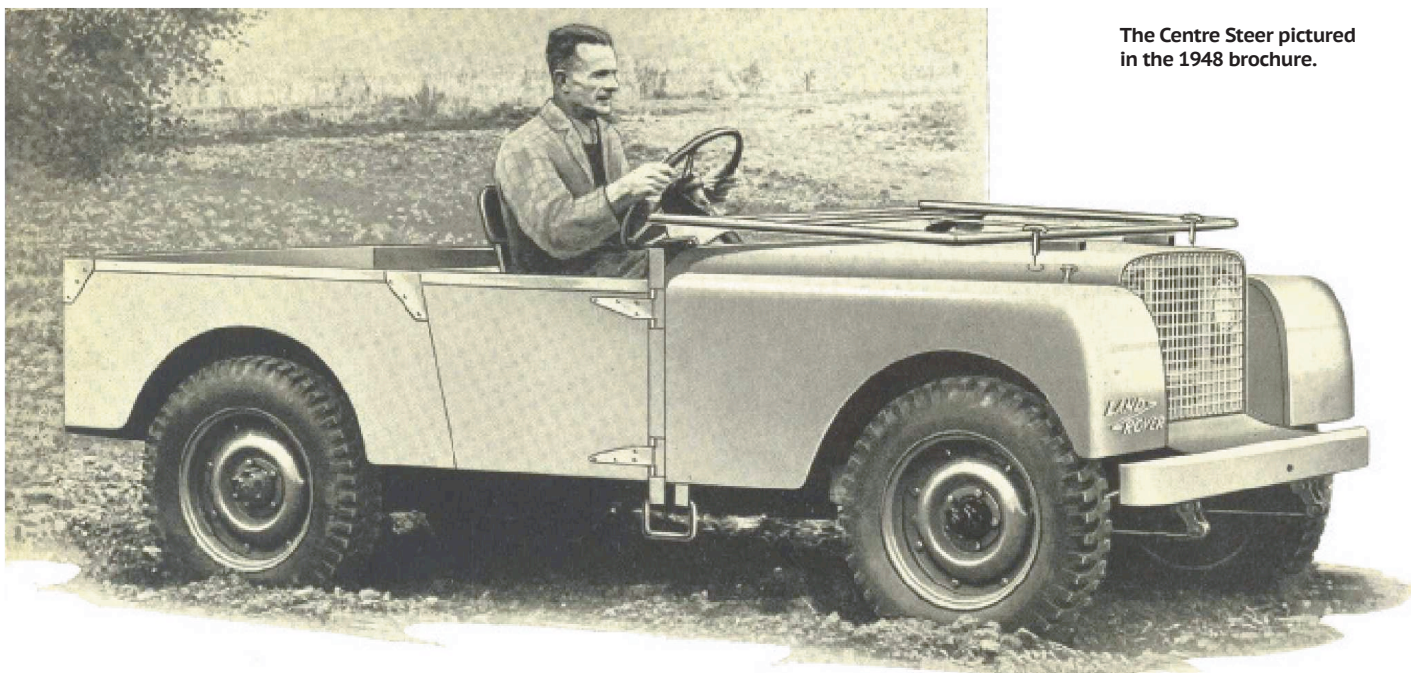


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The Centre Steer pictured in the 1948 brochure.

# LAND ROVER

## – THE ORIGIN OF THE SPECIES

### Formative years 1948-58.

*Commonplace in any 'Vintage Roadscene' from around 1949 was the Land Rover.*

*Just as common was seeing the vehicle in a Vintage Off-Roadscene. There has been a lot written about the why and the wherefore of the vehicle.*

*Norman Chapman delves into his archive and comes up with some facts that you may not know, along some interesting pictures of the early vehicles.*

#### The why, what for and when

The driving force behind the Rover car company in the period during and after World War II were the Wilks brothers. Spencer Wilks was the Managing Director, while Maurice Wilks was the Engineering Director. The times after the conflict were, for some, more austere than the years when the war was at its peak.

In terms of British car production, this austerity manifested itself with a shortage of steel to build the cars. Rover, a big producer of quality cars, had concentrated on building aircraft engines and components to assist in the war effort. Aircraft engine designer, Frank Whittle later collaborated with the company

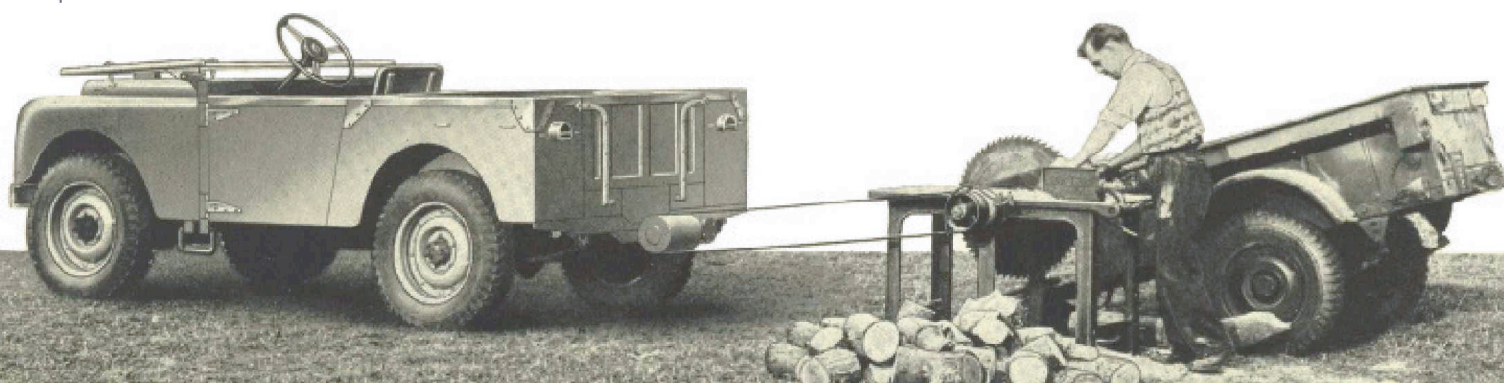
in the development of gas turbine jet engines.

This wartime diversification left little time for car production. Later, the collaboration faltered, with Rover handing over their part of the development to Rolls-Royce. In turn, Rolls-Royce gave Rover the rights and the construction equipment to manufacture the Rolls-Royce 27 litre V12 Meteor engine, fitted predominately into World War II tanks.

#### The poor man's Jag

Before the war, Rover cars were selling well and were always known, in an uncomplimentary way, as 'the poor man's Jag'. Peacetime saw Rover with nothing new to offer, apart from revamped versions of the pre-war cars. Because

**Below:** The Centre Steer fitted with the essential rear mounted pto, powering a circular saw.







**Above** Where it all began, the vehicle of inspiration, the Willys Overland Jeep.

**Right:** One of the first trade magazine adverts for the vehicle and telling of the Commercial Motor Show in 1948.

of the war, Britain was nearly bankrupt and the government came up with a short-term plan. Foreign money was needed quickly and all areas of manufacturing were told to give priority to selling overseas.

This made matters worse for Rover and, because of the steel rationing, more emphasis was given to aluminium, which was not rationed and plentiful. Rover saw no alternative in this situation and decided to use the lightweight material. The company began the fabrication of the chassis and other related components for the 'M' prototype car. The M and M1 type was a small car, based on the Fiat 'Topolino', which would later become the well-known Fiat 500. The M project was abandoned shortly afterwards but, nevertheless, working with aluminium had been experienced by the workforce.

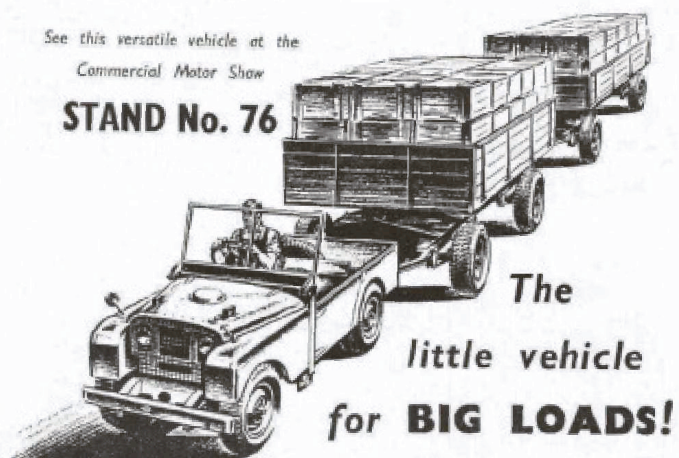
### Army surplus Willys Overland Jeep

Maurice Wilks owned a holiday cottage in Anglesey, off the North-west coast of Wales, where he would spend his weekends. He had

October 1, 1948.

See this versatile vehicle at the  
Commercial Motor Show

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The Land Rover supplies the answer to many problems in industry and farming. It is a four-wheel drive delivery and towing wagon, a fast economical vehicle on the road, a handy light tractor and a mobile power plant, with built-in power take-off to operate all kinds of equipment. It is rigidly built for hard work and hard wear, with chassis and all exterior steel fittings galvanised against corrosion. The Land Rover can be supplied with right or left-hand drive as required.

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vehicle

MADE BY THE ROVER COMPANY LTD., SOLIHULL, BIRMINGHAM



**Right: Another 1948 advert from Commercial Motor magazine.**

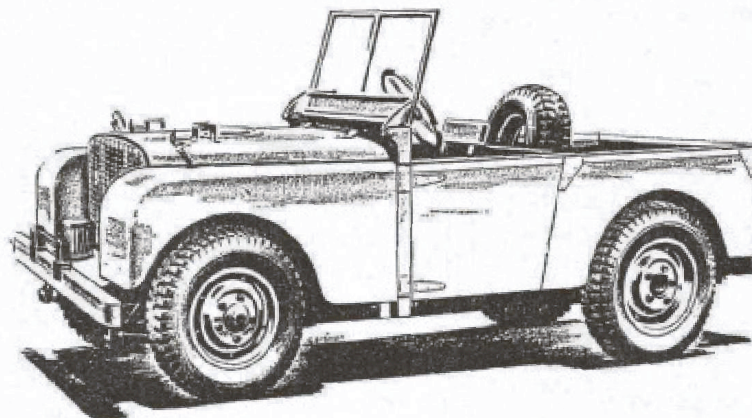
bought a ex-US Army surplus Willys Overland Jeep for use at the cottage and thought it was an excellent design. He wasn't the only one, as ex-army surplus Jeeps were much in demand for their rugged go-anywhere capability.

The Wilks Brothers viewed the whole situation Rover cars were in and decided that the company would build a similar vehicle to the Jeep, to be used in a much-needed post-war agricultural environment. The hope was that this strategy would serve as a temporary solution to the scant and frustrating car production. It was time to look for design inspiration and a few ex-military vehicles were scrutinised, like a Ford half-track. As Wilks had used the Jeep widely, it seemed the obvious vehicle to use as a starting point. As the old saying goes, 'Imitation is the sincerest form of flattery', however the proposed new vehicle would have it's own characteristics.

### The Centre Steer prototype

The original prototype, know as the 'Centre Steer' was hastily built on a Jeep chassis, before a Rover chassis had been fabricated. The rear axle and springs were Rover, however the Jeep type single shackle brackets were used. Power came from a 1389cc, 48hp motor, which was the same as fitted to the model 10 car. The seed had been planted by the government, when British manufacturers were told to attract foreign buyers.

November 12, 1948.



## GO anywhere... DO anything

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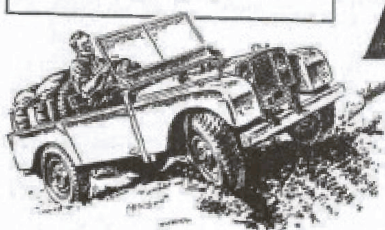
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● **POWER TAKE-OFF** Gives a powerful drive for generators, compressors or agricultural equipment.

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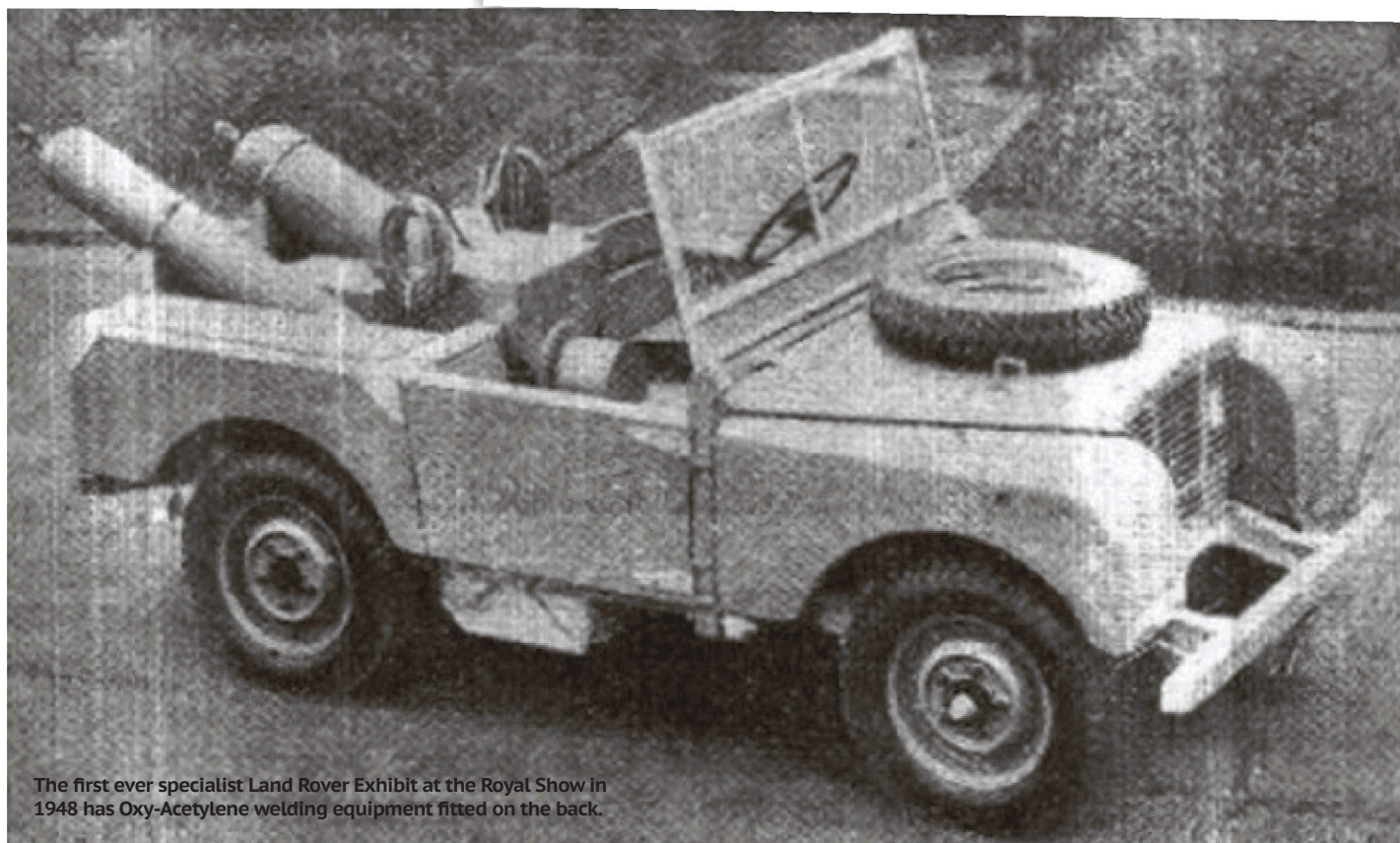
The versatility of the Land-Rover is really amazing. A four-wheel drive tractor, a delivery wagon, a mobile power plant and a fast economical vehicle on the road—the Land-Rover is all these things rolled into one. With its power take-off, to drive independent equipment, it makes a direct appeal to farmers, field engineers, industrialists, in fact anyone who needs a fast, powerful, adaptable, utility vehicle. The Land-Rover is built for hard work and hard wear at low running costs and (note for the exporter) is supplied with right or left-hand drive as required. Ask your local dealer for particulars.



# LAND-ROVER

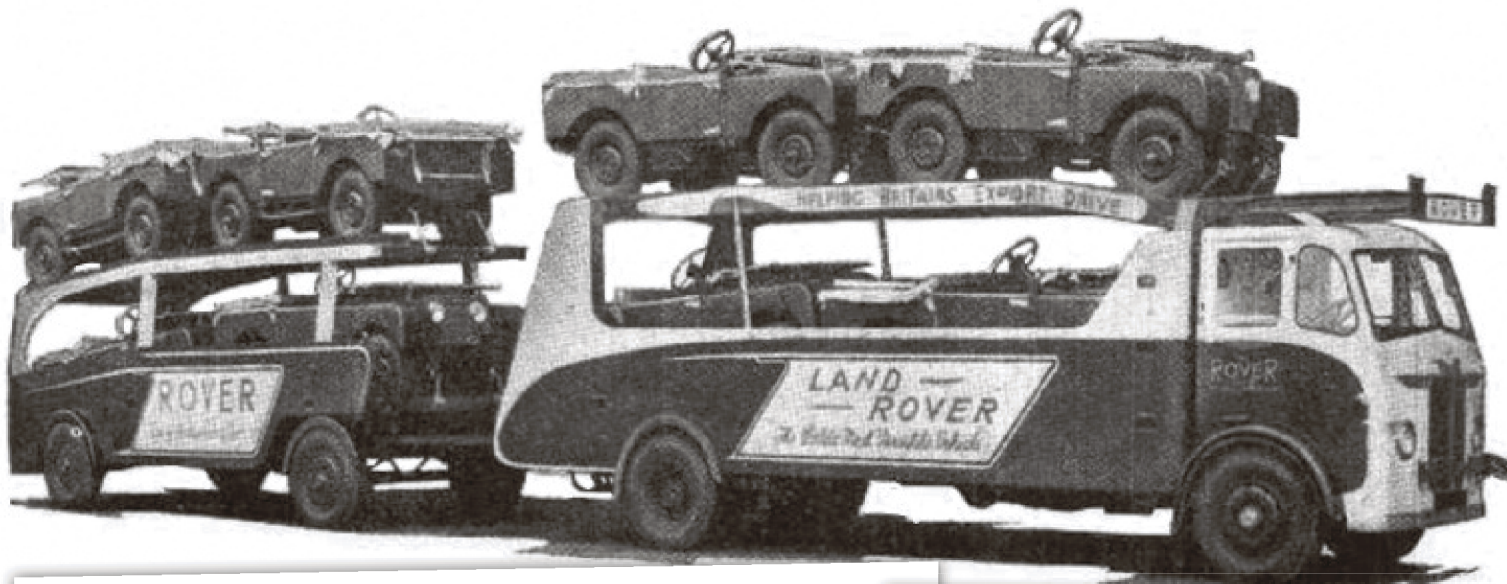
Britain's most versatile vehicle

Made by The Rover Company Limited, Solihull, Birmingham.



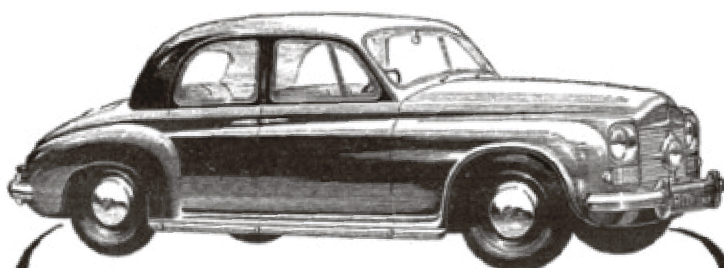
The first ever specialist Land Rover Exhibit at the Royal Show in 1948 has Oxy-Acetylene welding equipment fitted on the back.





November 16, 1949.

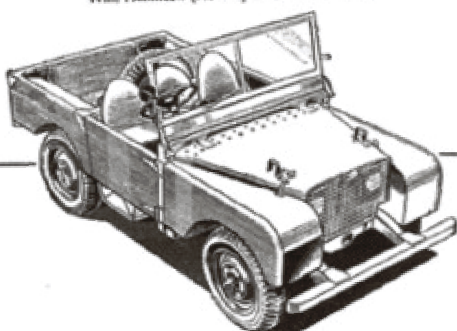
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AT THE SCOTTISH MOTOR SHOW,  
Kelvin Hall, Glasgow

You will want to see the entirely new Rover Seventy-Five. With its versatile companion the Land-Rover, it will be displayed at the Scottish Show by the following distributors and dealers:—

Jas. Gibbon (Motors) Ltd. Stands 42 & 79	Rossleigh Ltd (Cars) ... .. Stand 26
Taggart (Motherwell) Ltd. ... Stand 58	James Forrest (Cars) ... .. Stand 5
Jas. Tweedie Ltd. ... .. Stand 15	Rossleigh Ltd. (Commercial) ... Stand 64
Wm. Hamilton (Motors) Ltd. ... Stand 8	



THE ROVER COMPANY LIMITED SOLIHULL BIRMINGHAM & DEVONSHIRE HOUSE LONDON

With this in mind, it was decided to fit the steering column in the middle of the vehicle, above the transmission. Strangely, the thought pattern was on agricultural tractors, which had centre-mounted steering, which the Land Rover was to emulate. Wilks also thought that if the steering wheel was in the centre, the vehicle could be sold anywhere in the world. Furthermore, there would be no complications in making the vehicle right or left hand drive.

In engineering terms, the steering system

was a cobbled-together affair, using a steering box taken from the Jeep. A chain was used between a sprocket on the base of the column to the separate steering box mounted in an offset position. It soon became apparent that the driver sitting in the middle, astride the transmission tunnel, was an uncomfortable place to be.

In addition, when the later idea to add a canvas or hard cover roof was used, the drivers hand signals could not be seen by



**LAND ROVER**  
**Station Wagon**

Adaptability is the keynote in this version of the already famous Land-Rover: seven roomy seats, three in the front, one being a tip-up and four at the back—all of which fold away; a four-wheel drive with eight forward speeds; and a low petrol consumption. There is no end to the number of individual uses to which it can be put!

**Above:** One of the first major body conversions. The Tickford Station Wagon built in 1948.

**Top:** Load em up, move em out! A Leyland Beaver 12B1 with Brockhouse transporter and trailer, pictured in 1951.

**Left:** Aluminium, the new steel. A Motor magazine advert from 1949, showing the P4 and the Land Rover.

following vehicles. It is unclear as to how many prototypes saw the light of day. However, the centre steering position was soon shelved.

There was another major feature on this prototype, which was not carried forward onto the first production models. The sides of the vehicle had cutaways for driver ingress and egress, similar to the Jeep. This was later changed and short doors were added. Mentioned earlier was the fabrication of the M type chassis using aluminium, ironically, the material used for the Land Rover chassis was galvanised steel. The plentiful stock of aluminium was the chosen material for the bodywork.







of 25-27 mpg. The four-speed gearbox was a tried and tested design, which had been used in some Rover saloon cars.

The two-range transfer box was a brand new item, to take the drive to the front wheels. Mentioned earlier, Maurice Wilks talked about the Land Rover and the farm tractor in the same breath. In keeping with what the vehicle was intended for, it came with the option of a power take off. This could be mounted either in the centre or at the rear of the vehicle. The vehicle was also fitted with a freewheeling device on the front axle.

## Showtime!

To satisfy the Government guidelines on attracting foreign buyers, Rover launched the 80 inch wheelbase vehicle at the Amsterdam Motor Show in April 1948. The vehicle made its British debut at the Bath and West agricultural show in the May. Next showing was at The Royal Show held at York in July. Then it was the Commercial Vehicle Show at Earls Court, London, in October of the same year.

At the asking price of £450, it did not take long for the order book to be full and the Rover response in the first year of production was 3,048 vehicles. The next year, 8,000 units were built, with 1950 seeing this figure doubling to 16,000. Not bad for a vehicle which was going to be a stop-gap to alleviate the problems the Rover car company was going through.

## Aluminium, the new steel

Meanwhile, the saloon car side of the business was on a more even footing, with the launch of the P4 series. Steel was now more plentiful, but aluminium was used widely in the car's design, as the doors, bonnet, boot lid and some internal panels were all made of aluminium. PICTURES 4.

## Sales gone Global

Sales of the Land Rover throughout the world were encouraging, and the marketplace for buyers was wide-ranging. As well as the



**Above and below: The Wilks vision in action in 1957, with a farmer modification of removed doors. These were powered by the 2 litre Diesel.**

original targeted clientele of the agricultural community, the military, the fire service, oil exploration organisations, electricity boards and the ambulance service were all interested in the vehicle. Shortly afterwards, improvements were made to the vehicle, including longer wheelbase lengths, different body styles and a more powerful engine. The short wheelbase version was increased to 86in and there was now also a LWB chassis, at 107in. The increase in length gave more scope to a longer rear overhang, in turn making the load carrying area, bigger.

An OHV petrol engine was introduced, replacing the out-moded overhead inlet and side exhaust valve engine used from day one. This new 1997cc, known as the 2 litre, was a four cylinder motor, rated at 52hp, giving more power and torque, which was much needed. In 1956, the wheelbase was altered again with the SWB now being 88in and the LWB now 109in.

Major achievements came thick and fast when, in 1957, Rover introduced a four cylinder 2 litre diesel engine. The motor had a bore and stroke of 3 3/8in by 3 1/2in, with a rated output

of 52hp at 3,500 rpm. By 1958, in the region of 200,000 Land Rovers had been manufactured. At this juncture, the company decided to launch the Series II and the rest, as they say: "is history".

## Not forgetting the Jeep

It's worth noting that, as the Land Rover was hitting the heights, the inspirational vehicle was doing the same. Across the pond, the Jeep was still being produced in numbers similar to our vehicle. Willys had a go at beating the Land Rover at its own game when, in 1956, they launched the CJ-5, a state-of-the-art model, in the UK.

In comparison, the CJ-5 was more powerful, with a four cylinder 70 hp motor. Just like the Land Rover, the Jeep has maintained it's position in the global marketplace and both have gone through a number of model changes. More on the early history of the Willys Jeep, next time...

**The second chapter begins with the Series II in 1958.**







# Fruit and Veg in Leicester

*Colin Chesterman looks back at Leicester Wholesale Fruit Market and the vehicles associated with it.*

**L**eicester Wholesale Fruit Market was built around 1902 and located in Yeoman Street and Halford Street in the town centre. At this time, all the transport was horse-drawn, but it graduated to motor lorries, most of which were based away from the market site.

As time progressed and the local population expanded, it was in October 1968 that a new site was found on Freemans Common, on a six acre plot, and the new market was built by a local contractor, J H Hallam & Son Ltd, at a cost of £400,000.

This made a vast improvement to the facilities, and there was always a good collection of lorries to be seen, most of them collecting produce from the wholesalers. There were something like 12 to 15 produce companies which moved to the new site, along with retail market traders.

Over the years, trade has changed, with supermarkets and mini-markets replacing many of the older specialist shops. Some of the wholesalers had their lorries converted to curtain-sided bodies, which went round the retail green-grocers, selling the produce off the lorries.

Out of the original wholesalers, there are only two which are still trading today, C & P Wilson and Total Produce Ltd, which was originally known as Francis Nicholls (Leicester) Ltd. However, many of the companies traded for over a hundred years.

Quite a few lorries were operated by a lot of the wholesalers. J E Walker used Morris-Commercials; A Marks used Bedfords, Seddons and Dodges; Parkinsons used Dodges, Dennis and Bedfords; Kirk, Kirktons and Knibs all used Vulcans; and A W Squires used REO Speedwagons to name a few.

The pictures show the old market in its heyday, with the surrounding streets packed with vehicles being loaded with the produce, plus a selection of the different vehicles of the many operators which could be seen there over the years.



**Top:** An REO Speedwagon, BRY 365 (like nearly all the vehicles registered in Leicester, in this case, in 1937) of A W Squires, Fruit and Potato Salesman, outside the company's premises at the market.

**Above:** An old view of an early part of the Leicester Wholesale Fruit Market, with trade under way.



**Right:** A 1960s photograph, showing Yeoman Street, with lots of market activity going on. This is now a shopping area, with a multi-storey car park. A lorry of local company, A J Willis, can be seen, along with a Lister three-wheeler, which was used to move produce between the wholesale and retail areas of the market.

**Below:** Another shot of the old wholesale market in action.



**Right:** A Dodge 100 Series 'Parrot-nose' of Geest Industries, of Spalding, Lincolnshire, KEW 39 (a most appropriate registration for this vehicle, from Huntingdon in 1951), with a delivery for the Leicester market.

**Below:** Another Dodge 100 Series platform lorry, GJF 851 of 1950, in the livery of Parkinsons (Leicester) Ltd, fruit, vegetable and potato salesmen.





**Right:** The lady is doubt the driver's wife or girlfriend, posing with the 1958 Thames Trader, URY 309, of G Goodman & Sons, another wholesale merchant, based at the market.

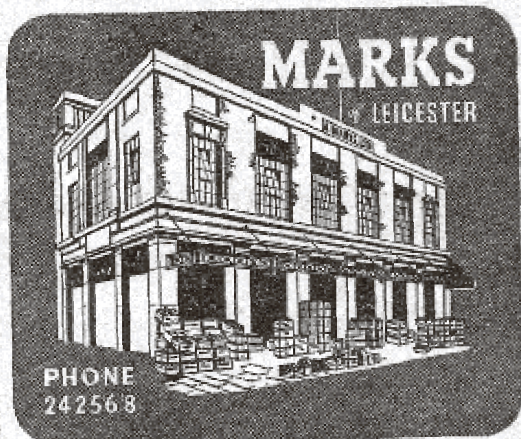
**Below:** A scene in Halford Street, with A Marks premises on the right. The company's Dodge 500 Series lorry and Bedford CA van are seen top left, along with a customers' Morris Traveller and J2 van, Ford Transit and 400E vans, and a barrow also carrying A Marks signwriting.

**Below right:** A pre-war Thornycroft, CJF 912 of 1939, in the livery of Pat Barratt, another company based at the Leicester Wholesale Market.

**Bottom:** A later Dodge 300 Series, with the LAD cab, 874 DBC, from 1962, seen before delivery to A Marks, a major company based at the market.







look forward to another  
**100 YEARS  
 OF SERVICE**



**Above:** Yeoman Street seen when the market was being demolished.

**Left:** An advert for A Marks, commemorating 100 years in business, showing the company's premises at the corner of the wholesale market.



**Above:** Parkinsons must have soon changed its allegiance from Dodge to Bedford, with this early 'A' Type, with the sidelights beside the headlights, seen before delivery to the company, another based at the wholesale market.

A later Bedford TK  
 7½-8 ton gross  
 platform lorry, 824  
 CJF from 1961,  
 with a headboard  
 suggesting  
 children should  
 'eat fresh fruit and  
 vegetables'.



Main contracting for the new  
**WHOLESALE MARKET**  
 FREEMANS COMMON  
 was carried out by...

**J.H. HALLAM & SON LTD.**

*Builders and Contractors*  
 606 LEICESTER RD., WILSTON FIELDS, LEICESTER Tel: 652495

architects:  
 W. & R. BURNFIELD & K. H. GRINDY,  
 1 Museum Square,  
 Leicester Tel: 60982

Chartered Quantity Surveyors:  
 COVARD & ROSE & COOPEL, NITCO,  
 1105A Leicesters Rd.,  
 Leicester LE2 5TP Tel: 28485

Consulting Structural Engineers:  
 LATHAM & PARTNERS,  
 59 FENCIBLE RD.,  
 Leicester Tel: 28508

**Above:** An advert showing the new market building, featuring the names of the builders, architects, surveyors and engineers involved.





**Above:** Another market trader was Halls of Syston, Leicestershire, which ran this small 1969-70 Bedford TK, VBC 529H.

**Below:** An advert for Francis Nicholls, featuring a shot of the company's premises at the new market.



**Above:** Long Brothers ran shops around the Leicester area and operated these two Bedford TL curtain-siders, including B720 YFJ (Devon, 1984-5).

## FRANCIS NICHOLLS

LIMITED

(Member of the Francis Nicholls Group of Companies)

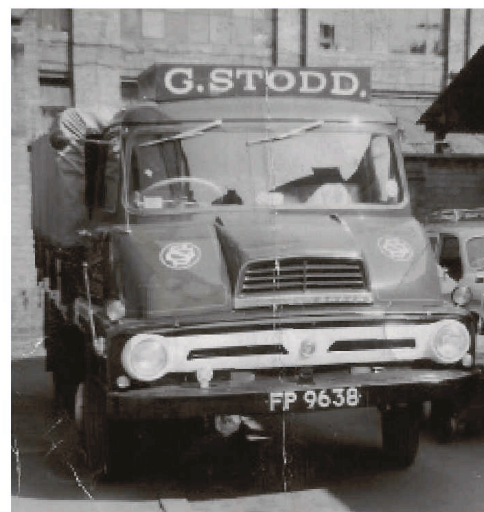


**Stands No. 10-17**

NEW WHOLESALE FRUIT MARKET

TELEPHONE 29916/20 TELEX 34392

**The People that  
Market Folk Trust**

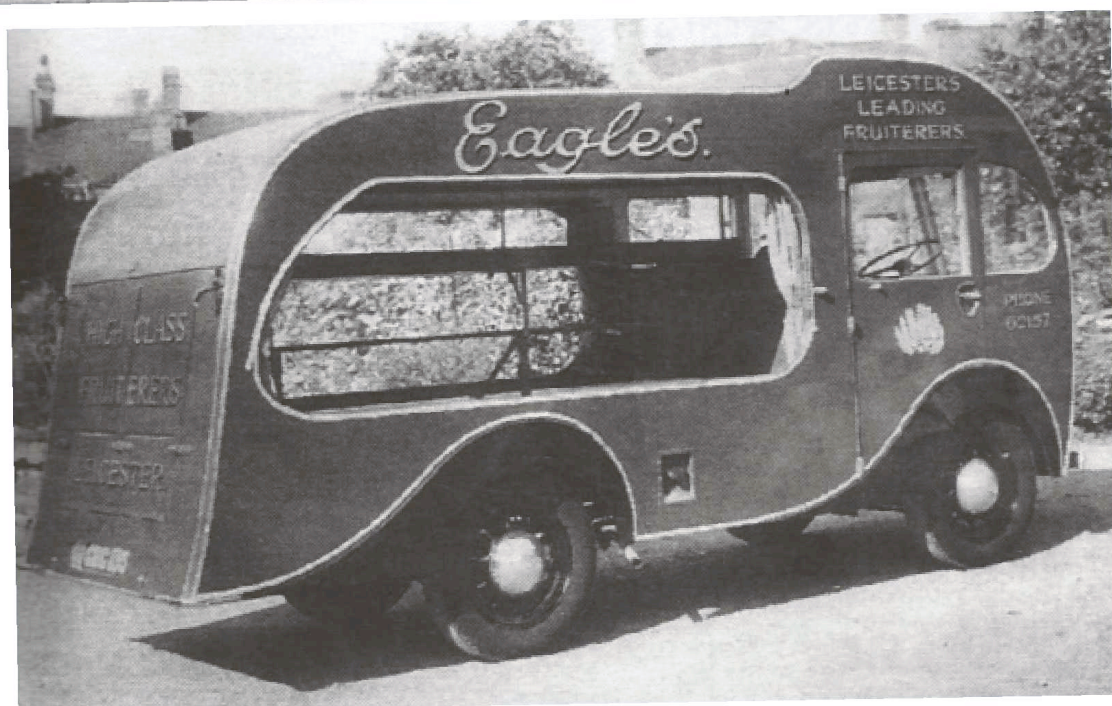


**Right:** An advert for Francis Nicholls, featuring a shot of the company's premises at the new market.



**Right:** Another later curtain-sided vehicle was this 1981-2 Volvo F6, MJF 28W, operated by Sketchley's of Thurmaston, another market trader.

**Below:** Loads of strawberries in punnets being moved from the Fox Street railway sidings to the wholesale market in Halford Street, by a whole fleet of horse-drawn carts.



**Left:** This stylish 1938 coachbuilt vehicle, CBC 133, on what was probably a Morris-Commercial chassis, judging by the 'Easi-clean' wheels, was used by Eagle's, which claimed to be Leicester's 'Leading Fruiterer'...



# The Original Scammell Trunker

*Phil Moth* has provided us with a set of the manufacturer's pictures of the 1960 Trunker, to which *Mike Forbes* has added some comments and information.



**Above:** The completed Scammell Mk I Trunker, with its LAD 'Vista-Vue' cab is seen at the works before its appearance at the 1960 Commercial Motor Show at Earls Court.

**S**cammell produced three Mk I Scammell 6x4 Trunker prototypes in 1960, which were fitted with the LAD 'Vista Vue' cab and horizontal Gardner 6HLX diesel engines.

It was initially thought that Shell-Mex & BP tried two of them, registered 377 and 378 BGO, with the third going to McKelvie & Co of Barrhead, registration unknown, as this company thought the type would be suitable to carry steel sections on semi-trailers with long front overhangs.

However, it has since been stated on the CCMV website by Allan Ross, whose father drove the second of the vehicles, that all three Mk I Trunkers went to Shell-Mex & BP, 377 and 378 BGO working with spirit tanks and 379 BGO with a 'black oil' tank trailer.

According to John Fadelle, in his History of Scammell Lorries series (ultimately to be made into a book), in Part 19, in the Scammell Register Newsletter of July 2011,

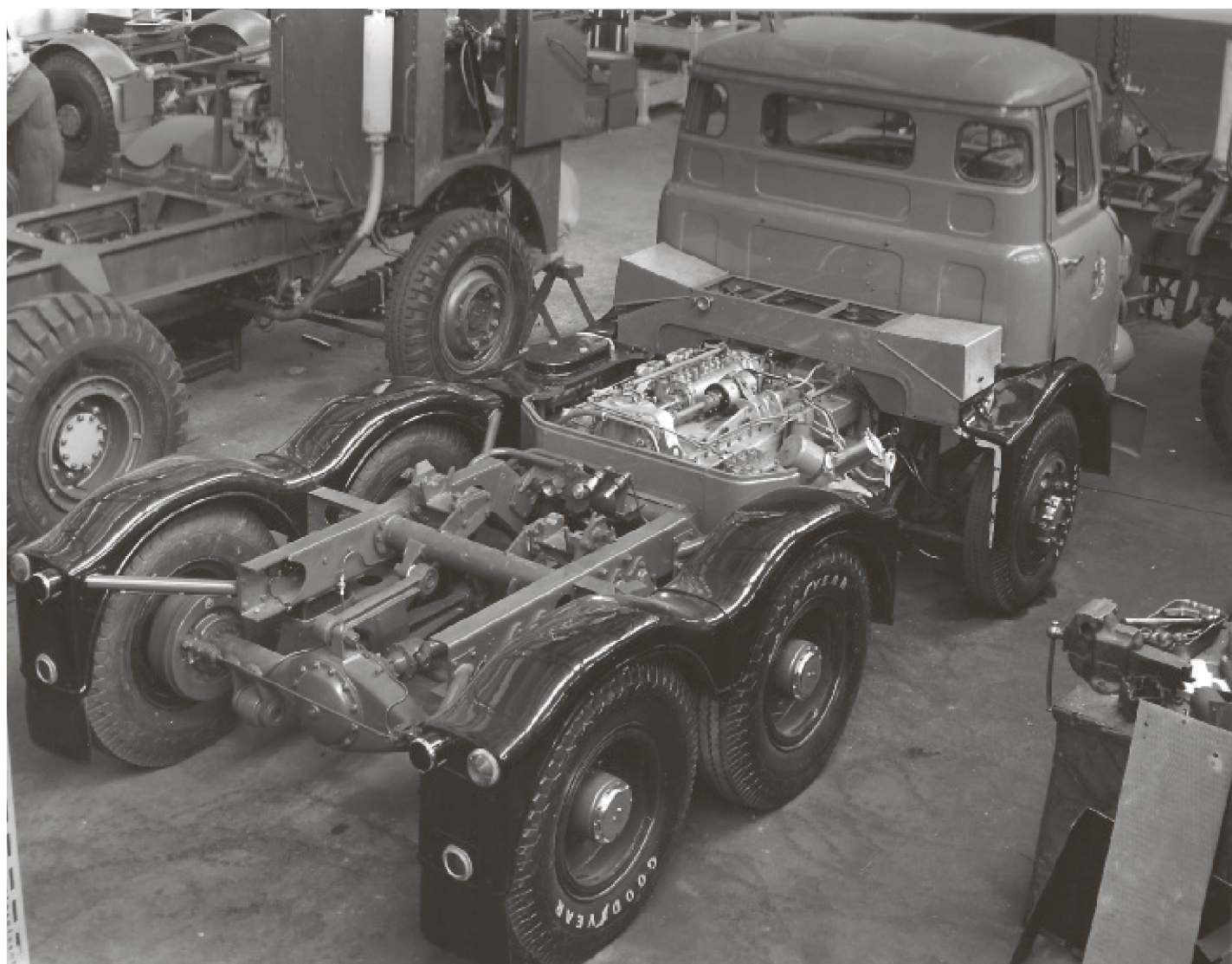


**Above:** The office staff can be seen admiring the Trunker from the upper window as it stands in the yard.

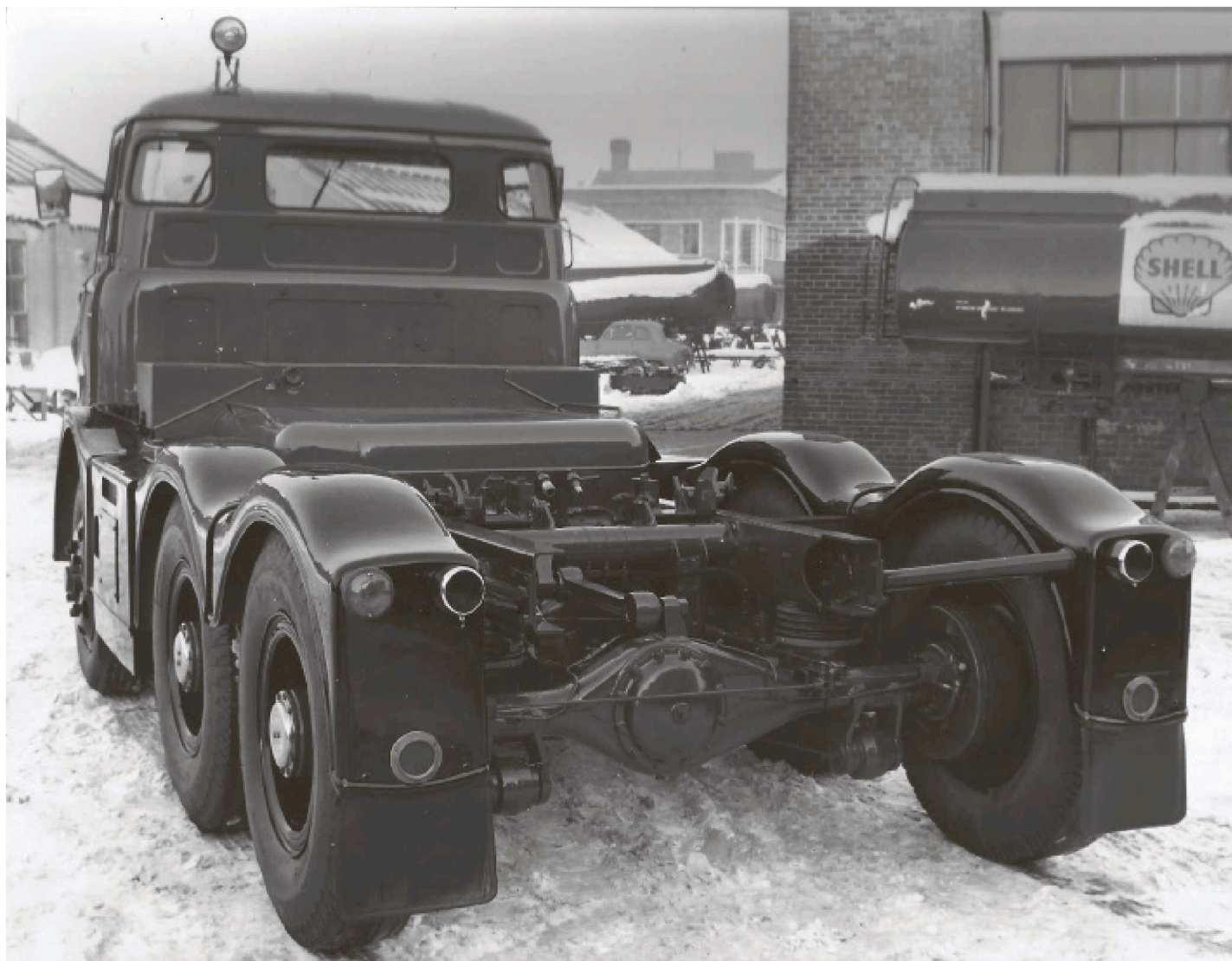




**Above:** A rear view on the vehicle emphasises how the matching faired-in mudguards added to the streamlined effect, enhancing the overall appearance of the artic. **Below:** This view in the works shows the installation of the horizontal Gardner 6HLX behind the cab, along with the double-drive rear bogie.





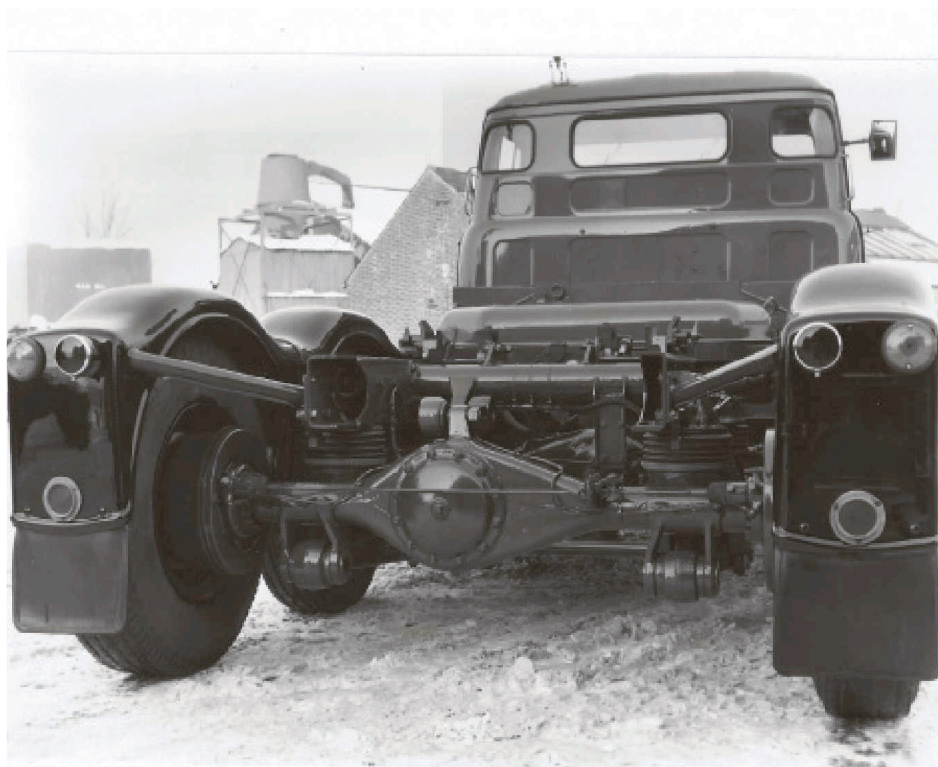


the Trunker was originally known as the 'Ten-wheeler' by Scammell and was one of a number of significant engineering developments by the company at the time. The oil companies were keen to take advantage of the legislative changes in the early 1960s, expecting a rise in the maximum allowable gross train weight from 24 tons to 30 tons.

For forecourt delivery, a more manoeuvrable artic was favoured, which would also meet the then current 24 tons gross operation, so Shell-Mex & BP discussed with Scammell a short five axle artic tanker. Tri-axle trailers were unknown in those days and twin drive axles were favoured for traction and to avoid 'jack-knifing'.

The solution to creating a short wheelbase six-wheeled tractor unit was to use the Gardner 6HLX engine, fitted behind the cab – incidentally offering excellent maintenance access – with the six-speed gearbox at the front, under the cab, driving the two rear axles, along with two ptos, for the load discharge pump and for a fan for the front-mounted radiator.

**Above and below:** Two views of the rear bogie and suspension set-up, with the engine under its easily-removed cover, as the tractor unit sits in the snow outside the works.







**Above:** 7 A rather heavily re-touched publicity photograph of the outfit, as it appeared on the Scammell stand at the 1960 Commercial Motor Show, still with its front bumper. **Below:** The second vehicle, 378 BGO, presumably after its show appearance, but before it went into service, on Scammell's Hertfordshire-issued trade plates, 178 AR, parked for a photograph, with other traffic, including a well-loaded British Road Services Leyland Octopus passing. This picture shows the 'Trunker' badge beneath the windscreen to good effect.





The same vehicle is seen again, ready for work. Although deemed a failure, the three prototypes appear to have put in a good few years' work with Shell-Mex & BP.



## THE TRUNKER MUST HAVE BEEN A DISAPPOINTMENT TO SCAMMELL AFTER ALL THE INVESTMENT IN A REVOLUTIONARY CONCEPT WHICH FAILED. TRI-AXLE TRACTORS LATER BECAME QUITE THE THING

The rear bogie used a pair of Albion hub reduction axles, with separate prop-shafts to each and a third differential between, similar to the set-up used later on the Routeman. The whole layout was squeezed into a wheelbase of just nine feet. The wide flat engine meant the frame had to be cranked down between the cab and rear bogie, which used Eaton-Hendrickson rubber suspension.

The 4000 gallon tank semi-trailer ran on trailing-arm air suspension, with the same 10.00 x 20 single tyres as the tractor unit's rear bogie.

Much was made of the lack of engine intrusion into the LAD cab, making it more spacious. The Trunker should have been the forerunner of many 1960s heavy articulated vehicles, with a good driving environment and low running costs. 378 BGO appeared at the 1960 Commercial Motor Show at Earls

Court. The streamlining around the wheel-arches on the motive unit and the matched tank trailer must have caught many an eye.

However, short wheelbase 6x4 vehicles are notoriously difficult to steer as the fixed bogie wants to go straight ahead. This allegedly happened to one of the Shell-Mex & BP vehicles, which ended up in a Scottish loch.

The Trunker must have been a disappointment to Scammell after all the investment in a revolutionary concept which failed. Tri-axle tractors later became quite the thing, such as the AEC Mammoth Minor, from about 1964, as manufacturers tried to find different ways to comply with the 1965 Construction & Use Regs, when the maximum gross weight of 32 tons became permissible for artics.

This legislation produced the Trunker Mk II 6x2 twin-steer with the more conventional

vertical Leyland 680 engine.

Allan Ross says the MK I Trunkers were in service from 1961 to early 1967, although the heavy Leyland Beaver-style front bumper had to be removed, as the vehicles turned out to be over-length when they went into service.

He says: "Every time I see some of the rare photos of this lorry, it brings back memories sitting as a passenger with my father 'Waggy' or lying on my wee bed on the floor on longer runs, for example to Ardrishaig or Aberdeen Airport.

I used to think I was king of the road. There were not many five axle lorries about then. I am only now appreciating that, although not a success, it was still a fair bit of engineering. Grangemouth to Cambeltown and back to Bonnybridge in a day – it must have had something going for it, on what were basically 'B' roads in the early 1960s..."



# AN EARLY *Art Form* REDISCOVERED

**Chris Salaman** looks back at some little books we all remember from our formative years and the man responsible for the lovely cover illustrations.

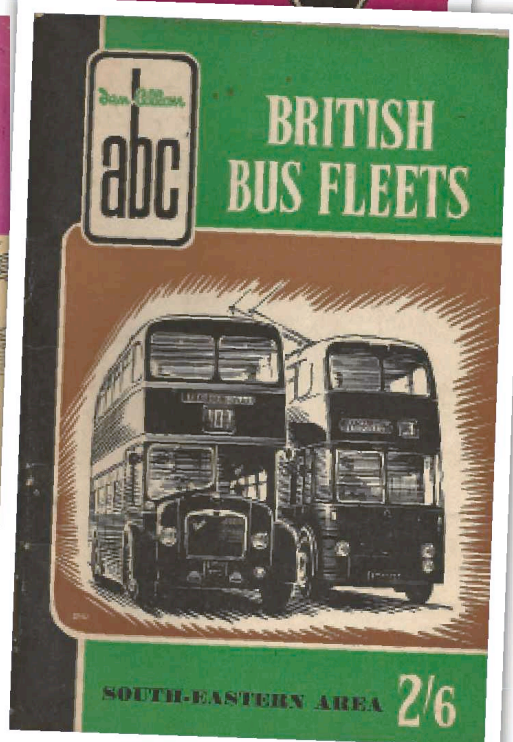
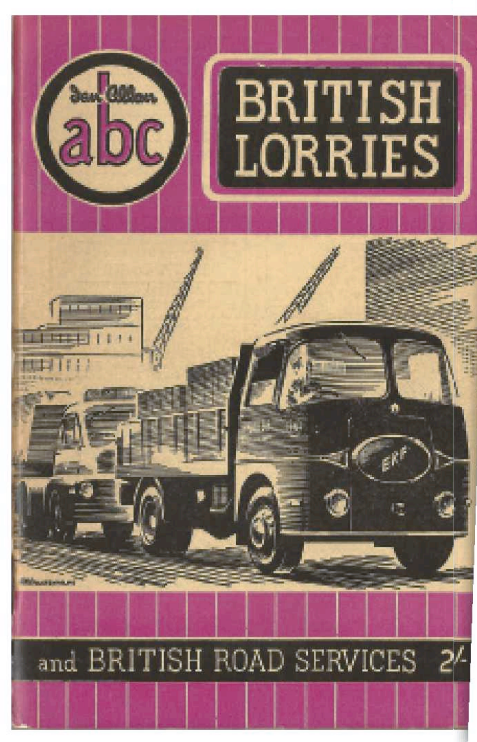
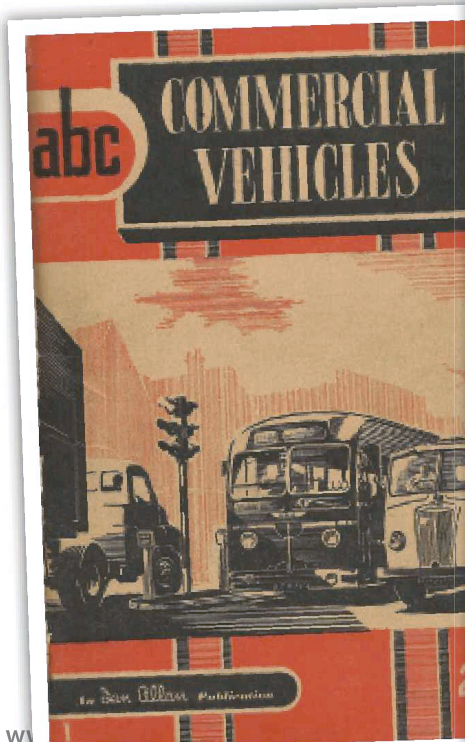
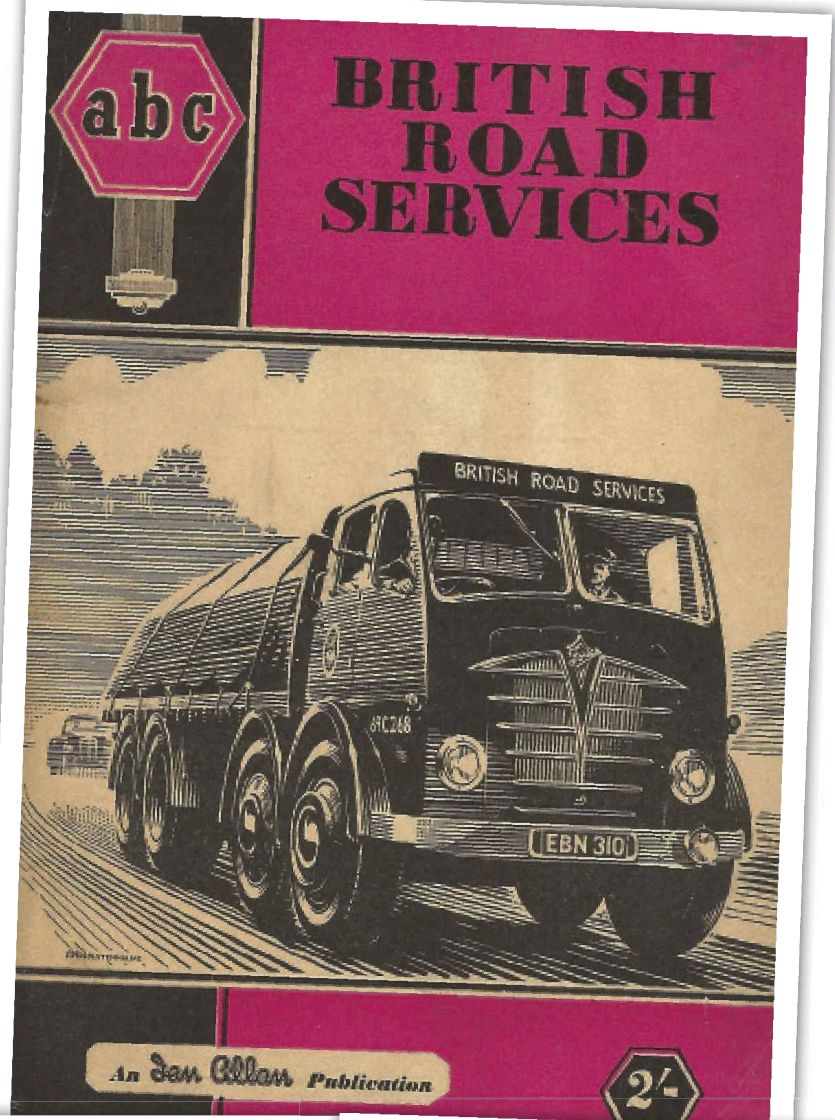
In my earliest days of taking an interest in lorries and buses, I was fascinated to find on W H Smith's bookstall on Chalfont and Latimer Station, one of the first of Ian Allan's ABC spotters booklets (usually on sale for a princely 2/-... four weeks pocket-money in those days).

The publication in itself was a masterpiece to read, with listings of all the various lorry manufacturers, and pictures too. But I always thought it was, indeed, the cover drawing that really gave this little publication its greatest attribute. I used to marvel at how the artist was able to depict such a perfect illustration of the real thing, by just what looked like straight lines within reason.

Well, after over 60 years... all has now been revealed in an excellent article I read in a recent magazine. The method used was in fact that of 'scraperboard', something that I, too, had experimented with in my early schooldays, in elementary fashion (and in fact have an example of an Albion Chieftain that now hangs in my old school... but hasten to add that it was nothing compared to the high standards of Ian Allan's artist).

The illustrator concerned turned out to be the enigmatic Arthur Nigel Wolstenholme, a freelance commercial artist born in 1920 and who lived in Watford all his life. Often he would just sign his work with his initials and, over 60 years, produced many thousands of illustrations, mainly for rail-associated adverts and so, but had started in earnest with Ian Allan in the 1940s.

If only he had come to some of my early school art lessons – after all, he only lived twelve miles away...





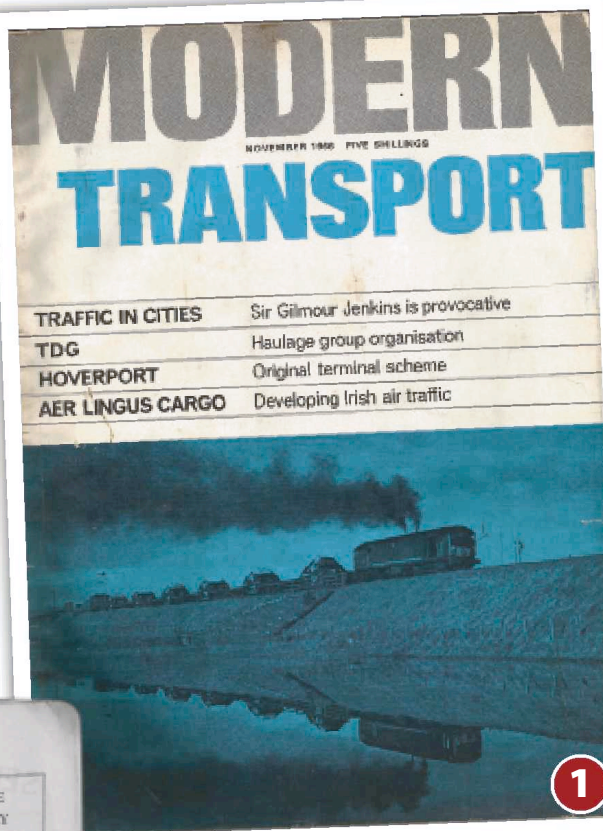
# PUBLISH

## - AND BE DAMNED!

# PART TWO

Until they both became part of the same ungainly empire, 'The Commercial Motor' and 'Motor Transport' each had larger readerships than any other title in the transport industry. But that didn't stop plenty of other publishers trying to win a slice of a booming postwar market. Malcolm Bates reviews some of the other publications available to previous generations of transport manager.

**T**he story this month is about the raft of transport industry magazines – or to be more accurate, their publishers – who had the nerve to take on the well-entrenched might of The Commercial Motor and Motor Transport.



**Left:** Multi-modal before it's time? The long-established transport weekly newspaper 'Modern Transport' styled itself 'The Times of the Transport World' and had a masthead logo featuring both passenger and goods transport by road, by rail, by ship and by air – with a drawing of the globe as if to make the point!

Bizarrely, while early postwar issues were full of articles about 'transport in the colonies', the ill-fated Brabazon airliner and how British-built diesel locomotives were speeding up rail travel around the world – our own railways still continued to take delivery of new steam locos.

Before the war? This issue from October 1933 highlights the Commercial Vehicles Exhibition – then still being held in the 'Empire Hall' at Olympia – and carries a heady mix of photographs, featuring the dramatic new AEC 'Q-type' double decker and the urban artie designed to replace the horse and cart in increasingly congested urban streets, the Scammell 'Mechanical Horse'. In contrast Sentinel was still delivering new steam lorries in direct competition with the likes of AEC, Dennis and Thornycroft – all of which advertised in this issue.

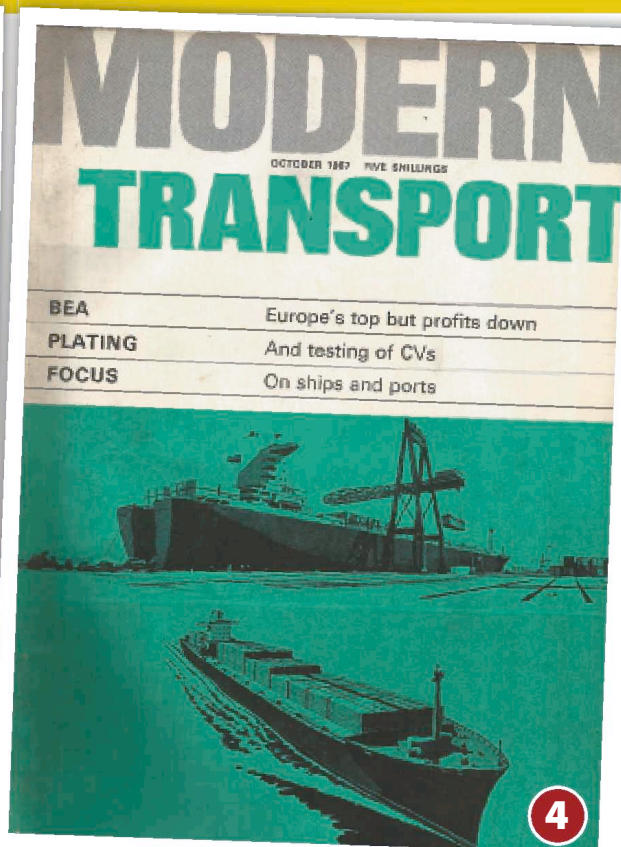
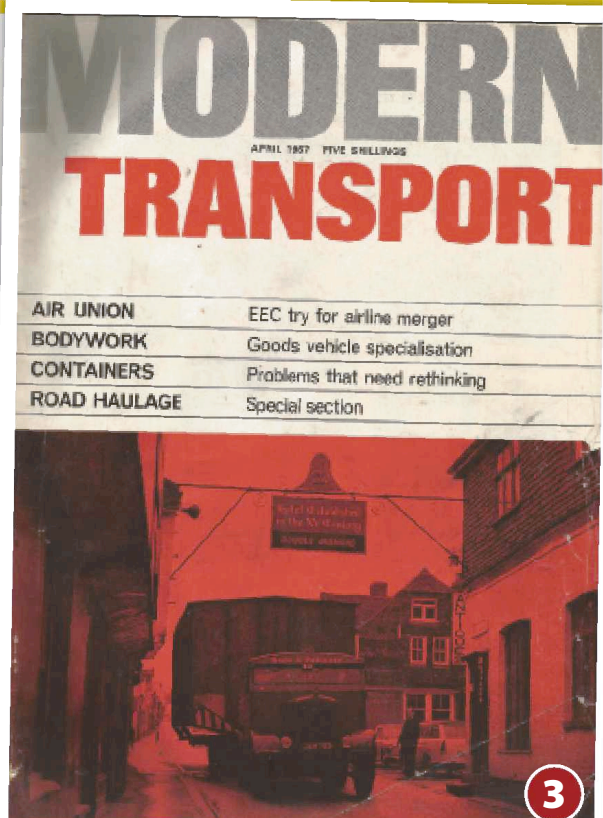
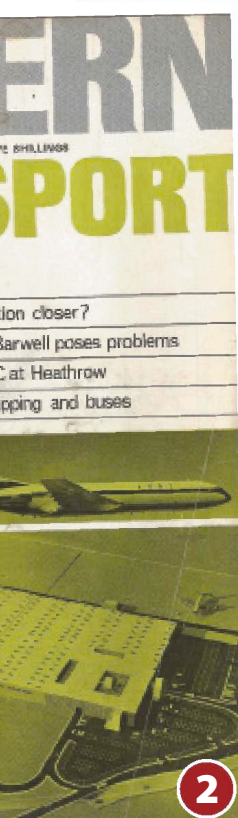
Modern Transport was published every Friday by "Modern Transport Publishing" with offices at Norman House, The Strand, London WC2 and printed by Odhams Press in Long Acre.

**Right (left page):** It's easy to forget how big a part some of the long-lost brand names played – not only in British road transport, but also as part of our national economy. Like Scammell, Thornycroft was certainly a brand that deserved more than being shunted around to AEC and subsequently to Leyland, before being allowed to die slowly. Back in 1930s, things were very different as this fabulous full page advertisement heralds: "No other range offers such a wide choice," it suggests – with chassis from 2 tons upwards to the 14ton 'Taurus' normal control trailer model.

**Right (right page):** The revolutionary AEC Q-Type bus chassis must have seemed a strange bedfellow in the 1930s 'Vintage Roadscene' alongside the no-nonsense Sentinel steamer. But here they are on the same page as 'Show Highlights'. What a contrasting sight they must have portrayed on the road – even more so as much urban delivery traffic in the early 1930s was still horse drawn.



# TAKING ON THE BIG BOYS



Above 1-4: By the 1960s, Modern Transport had been taken over by Ian Allan (trading as Modern Transport Publishing Co Ltd) and moved to Terminal House, Shepperton. The title had changed dramatically from black and white newspaper to a glossy 11½ x 8½ inch page format monthly magazine with expensive 'perfect binding'—which in truth was anything but 'perfect' as after a while, the pages become unstuck and tend to fall out!

These four issues from 1966/67 do illustrate that one key element of the old title still held true, however—every issue featured editorial on not only passenger and goods transport by road, but by rail, ship and aircraft as well. The front covers were deceptive, however, they all featured a single 'spot' colour which was also used as a tint behind the images, but trendy graphics or no, there was no colour inside.

Articles were wide-ranging with articulated hull ships—yes, really!—a proposed new hover train linking suburbs of Glasgow by using the old Caledonian Railway track formation and how the then sexy new passenger transport management idea—conurbations—might not be such a good idea, after all if experience in the USA was anything to go by.

My favourite story? An item on the production of the wings for Concorde at Weybridge, on the site of still derelict Brooklands featured an iconic Coles crane as modelled so well by Dinky Toys! Maybe the Brooklands Museum should start looking for one for its new aircraft production hall?





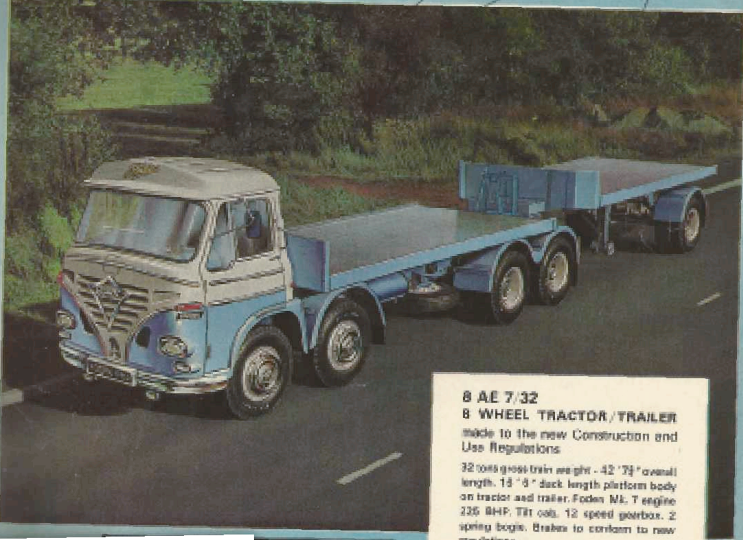


**Right:** Now tagged as being suitable for "The Road Transport Executive" – rather than a low-life 'manager' or some greasy-handed repair shop foreman, perhaps? – The Transport Journal is still having to balance 'goods' versus 'passengers' in both editorial and advertising.

On the front cover of this issue – but not mentioned inside, editorially – is the new Foden 'Twin Load'. In theory, this was a good way of utilising all that was good about a traditional eight wheeler and trailer – like stability – but with the speed and versatility of an artic. It might have worked at 32 tons gross, but it would have worked a lot better at 38 tons, with two longer loadbed platforms and a twin-axle bogie trailer. Or maybe with a second trailer on a dolly behind the first, at 42 tons? Alas, the regulations in the UK were – and still are – too restrictive to allow for such innovations.

True, both these leading titles changed considerably over the years – increasingly so, once Temple Press (publisher of The Commercial Motor) and Iliffe (publisher of Motor Transport) merged to become IPC, and later Reed Publishing. But they were still the two titles that every other wannabe transport magazine publisher had to beat. And as the following pages hopefully illustrate, quite a few tried to have a go...

**THE** *Klein Low loader*  
**Transport** *2/6*  
**JOURNAL**  
FOR THE ROAD TRANSPORT EXECUTIVE



**8 AE 7/32**  
**8 WHEEL TRACTOR/TRAILER**  
made to the new Construction and Use Regulations

32 tons gross train weight - 42'7 1/2" overall length, 15'6" deck length platform body on tractor and trailer. Foden Mk. 7 engine 225 BHP. T81 cab, 12 speed gearbox, 2 spring bogies. Brakes to conform to new regulations.

**FODENS LIMITED.**  
ELWORTH WORKS, SANDBACH,  
CHESHIRE. Tel. Sandbach 544 (14 lines)  
London Sales Office, 139 Park Lane, W.1.  
Telephone GROSVENOR 5832

*CHRYSLER  
see pgs 360*

314 *The Transport Journal, April 9, 1965*

## FORD FASHIONS THE FUTURE

with wide new range

Important features of this D730 tipper chassis are the robust per straightforward frame design and the easy accessibility of all major components. The fuel tank is mounted transversely at the rear.



Covering pay-load capacities of from 2 to 8 tons, with a tractor for loads up to 13 1/2 tons, the new "D" series Ford range offers many options of main components to make it suitable for all operating conditions

**W**HEN a company the size and importance of Ford of Britain embarks on the introduction of an entirely new forward-control series of commercial vehicles it makes news of considerable significance, particularly when the new models replace a range that has proved so successful over a number of years in a highly competitive field. The over a number of years in a highly competitive field. The over a number of years in a highly competitive field. The over a number of years in a highly competitive field.



Quick, one-man tilting of the cab to a 45-degree angle gives complete access to the engine and auxiliaries so that routine servicing and maintenance can readily be carried out.

In fact, the requirements of all classes of operator in home and export markets have been the foremost thoughts in the minds of the designers, with the result that the new range is claimed to provide "the most extensive spread of vehicles offered at one time by any British manufacturer." This versatility has been largely achieved through a considerable measure of interchangeability and options to suit specific applications, as the description which appears on the following pages will show.

When it came, the IPC merger was a major event, the management idea behind it may have sounded logical as it gave IPC a huge slice of all the advertiser's budgets. But the simple fact was, although there must have been rivalry between the two publications when they were fighting each other for the same basic readership, once they were part of the same company, things seemed to turn a bit nasty. There was clearly a fear that senior management would favour one title, while contemplating closing down the less successful one.

**Left** As was still the norm, The Transport Journal – note the 'The' to give added gravitas – featured editorial on both goods and passenger transport. Much more focussed than Modern Transport then, but as it was to turn out, readers would continue to prefer even more 'segregation'. As a result, titles such as 'Passenger Transport' flourished and even Commercial Motor and Motor Transport increasingly – but slowly – turned themselves into goods transport-orientated titles.

The editorial in this April 9th issue is still gloriously mixed – the new tilt cab Ford 'D-Series' gets a special feature alongside a 'Pay-as-You-Leave' system for one man bus operations – the idea being the passenger has to take a ticket on entry from a machine linked to a barrier and then pay the the driver on exit. Also worth remembering is that, at one time, the UK once had several successful manufacturers of hydraulic plant and machinery – not just JCB. In the news pages, alongside pictures of the single deck Daimler Fleetlines for the City of Birmingham, we find a brand new Scammell 'Highwayman' artic low loader that had just been delivered to Bray Construction Equipment. A 'Bray Loader' loading shovel was modelled by Lesney.



**TRANSPORT**  
World  
INCORPORATING **WORLD'S CARRIERS**  
TWO SHILLINGS and SIXPENCE

**COMET ECONOMY**

**FOR HIGHEST PROFIT IN AGGREGATE**

Throughout the U.K. Hovewingham have well over 200 Comets in service. Until recently, Hovewingham's hard worked fleet operating from their Hainham Quay consisted of 50 Leyland Comets and 12 vehicles of another make. Working an average of 48 hours per week, each vehicle shifts around 45 tons of aggregate per day and covers some 240 miles in the process. The Leyland Comet gives a hard day's work by any standard.

Comparison of servicing costs over a 3-month period shows that the Leylands cost under £11 each to maintain, the other heavy vehicles over £125 each. Working as tough site conditions they only had one Leyland half-shaft failure in a year! They say they also like Leyland's excellent service. Another good reason why you ask more about Cometeconomy.

**LEYLAND MOTORS LIMITED**  
Head Office and Home Sales: Leyland, Lancs. Tel: Leyland 21400 x  
OVERSEAS SALES: BERKELEY SQUARE HOUSE, BERKELEY SQUARE, LONDON, W1. Tel: 01-235 1111

### A CONSERVATIVE INDUSTRY

In fact, at one stage, to try and generate some clear water between what were two weekly publications covering the same events, senior management even went so far as to appoint a woman editor on Motor Transport and instruct the staff not to mention 'lorries', or grubby stuff like chassis specifications in the editorial. Instead, while Commercial Motor did all that, Motor Transport covered stories from a more clinical 'logistics management' perspective. Today, neither decision would cause howls of protest, or behind-the-scenes sniggering. But even as recently as the late 1980s, such notions would draw comment from what was still a conservative, male dominated industry. All that such reorganisations tend to create are openings for new competitors to gain a stronger foothold - which is exactly what happened. There's another element too - it seems that magazine readers don't tend to like change. Especially in large doses!

So quite what such conservative vehicle industry marketing managers thought when Harlequin Press (1955) Limited of Fleet Street introduced a SQUARE (italics) format transport magazine, is another matter. Luckily, (a) I have a rare example of 'Commercial Vehicles' - strapline, 'The Magazine for Road Transport Management' - in my archive and (b) the editor at the time, Eric Gibbins, is one of my all-time heroes, a worthy adviser, and (briefly) a colleague.

**Above:** Back in 1966 it cost "40 shillings" (£2) to subscribe to 'Transport World' - which is what a young Malcolm Bates did for a while. Again passenger and goods transport operators were the combined readership, but the added feature was that the title incorporated the venerable 'The World's Carriers' as well, so in theory, articles covered the scene outside of the UK as well. Hot topics for 1966 included the new BMC 'FJ' range as tested by 'John F Moon' - who was as much a famous name as was the trio of G Freeman Allen, Charles F Klapper and E L Cornwell on 'Modern Transport'. Inside, we find the results - and pictures - from the British Coach Rally which was held on the front in Brighton. Leyland took the front cover colour advert spot with the Comet tipper, while British Railways wasted yet more public money by advertising its rail freight services to road hauliers - yes, really!

**Right:** Here's a strange one. 'Freight Management' was published by Temple Press - the same publisher which produced The Commercial Motor. It featured many of the same advertisers, such as Leyland, Taskers and Crane Fruehauf trailers, but also included adverts from the likes of Lancer Boss and Lansing Bagnall sideloaders and fork lift trucks. 'Management' was the emerging word then, of course - just as 'logistics' has taken over from 'transport' in more recent years. Odd then, that in this trendy new world, Roadferry purchased traditional-looking Seddon tractors units to pull ro-ro trailers on the Preston-Irish Ferry service. The unit on the front cover - which is, note, an editorial front cover, not an advert - is unloading a Four-in-Line trailer loaded with 'Enkalon' Nylon.

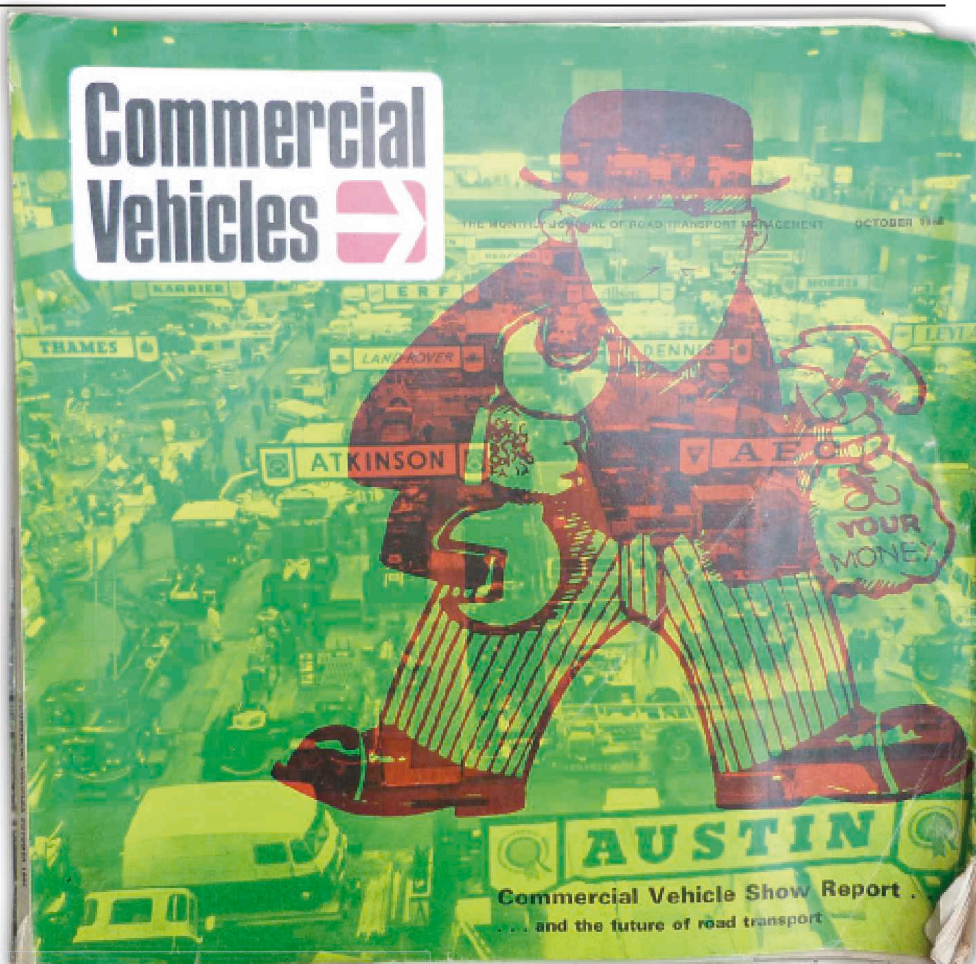
**FREIGHT MANAGEMENT**  
PHYSICAL DISTRIBUTION ECONOMICS  
DECEMBER 1965

**Distribution Plan links international production complex**



**Right:** Like square, man. Breaking the mould? This is what Harlequin Press hoped would be the right format to beat Commercial Motor and Motor Transport back in October 1968. The 11¼ inch square page format 'Commercial Vehicles' magazine allowed greater page design flexibility – and with a formidable editorial line-up including Eric Gibbins and Alan Bunting, it should have succeeded. Especially, as unlike most trade magazines at the time – which had a subscription rate – it was sent to transport professionals free of charge, all revenue coming from advertising. Highlights of this show issue included a road test of the BMC 'EA Walk-Through' panel van – wrongly concluding that it should "sell well against the competition" – and details of the revolutionary Leyland gas turbine trucks.

It's clear from both editorial and advertising content, that the UK transport industry was undergoing yet another Government-inspired upheaval as well as a technical one. In this same issue is a trendy colour advertisement for the dated, exposed radiator Atkinson – contrasting hugely with the gas turbine Ergo-cabbed Leyland! We also note that Seddon had progressed from building pretty-but-conventional-looking lorries with coachbuilt cabs to the Motor Panels-cabbed 13.4. It looked plain and boring, but enabled Seddon to do well enough to takeover the stuck-in-tradition Atkinson. It's also interesting to observe that Boalloy had yet to progress from a traditional builder of box and pantechicon vans to the award-winning 'Tautliner' concept that would change the look of lorry bodywork forever.



### A BRAVE ATTEMPT

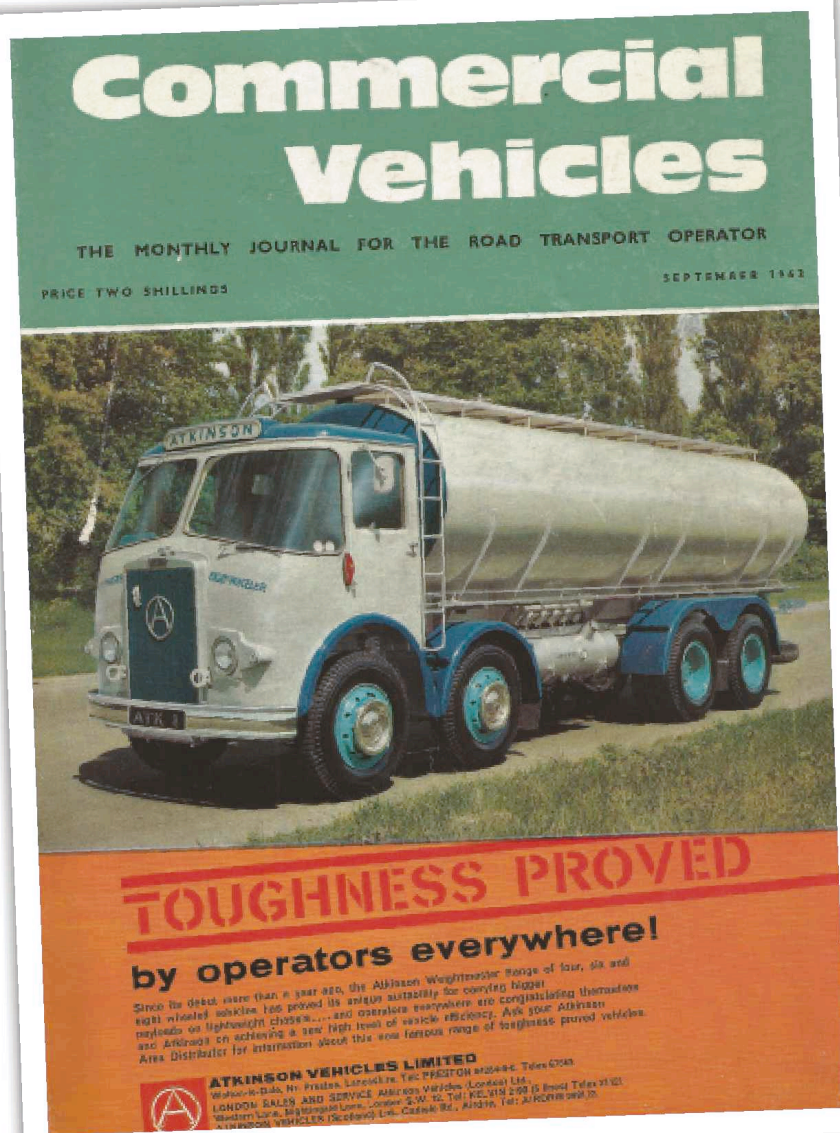
Interestingly, Commercial Vehicles didn't start off as 'square' – Editor Mike has a few regular 10x8 inch format issues in his archive (we're talking of an era before 'A4' ISO format page sizes, here), so it's interesting to compare the two formats. Looking at the square issue from a graphic designer's perspective (as I once was), it's interesting to note that standard full-page adverts already set for competitor titles could be incorporated alongside an extra 'leg' of editorial copy, which looks really great – even today. Commercial Vehicles has plenty of colour advertising too – especially for 1968 – with the likes of Ford, British Leyland, Atkinson Vehicles Scania and John Thompson (tankers), all taking colour ads. But then the sole square copy in my collection is a 'show issue' picked-up at the Commercial Vehicle Exhibition at Earls Court.

Sadly, as history will confirm, however 'fresh' and different Commercial Vehicles looked in it's square-page format, it wasn't enough to unseat the big boys and ultimately it – and many more newcomers both before it and after – failed. In fact, the only 'newcomer' that really shook things up was 'Truck'. But that's a story for another time.

The bottom line? Old transport magazines really are historic documents, in that not only do they catalogue the products of an entire industry, they also reflect the social and political background of the time.

We should take more care of them.

**Left:** In contrast, here is what earlier 'Commercial Vehicles' magazines looked like...





# LAUNDRY VANS

**Mike Forbes** brings us some pictures from the Chris Hodge 'Stilltime' Collection, which feature a type of delivery vehicle which tends to go unnoticed and is becoming rare these days...

**T**here was a time when many housewives sent their washing to a laundry – and more significantly, as far as we're concerned here – had it collected and delivered when clean. Hotels, restaurants and other such establishments also used laundry services, and many still do, such contract work making up most of what commercial laundries do these days.

The laundries also need vehicles to collect and deliver the work from their shops, where other customers would take their dirty clothes. Dry-cleaning also became the way an increasing proportion of our clothes are kept clean. Some is done on the premises,



We'll start with some vehicles working for Spring Grove, a name which survived until not so long ago. These vans are seen at its London premises. They include an Austin K8 'Three-way' van, UMY 4 (Middlesex, late 1949), which would have been ideal for the job with plenty of access to the load for deliveries. On the right is an Austin K2, with Luton bodywork, which we included in a previous 'Scenes Past' featuring that type of vehicle. Here we can just see that KGX 79 (London, 1949) has an extra door in the nearside, through which we can see laundry baskets have been loaded. The rear of another van, with a tailboard, but no doors on the upper half, CJN 789 (Southend, 1947), can be seen on the left. (CHC aab203)



**Above:** Another early post-war Austin in the Spring Grove fleet, no 542, a K4 Luton van, with a surprisingly long wheelbase, poses for the camera, unfortunately not showing its registration. (CHC aay377)





but a lot will be sent off to the laundry's central works, of which there are far fewer these days, meaning longer journeys and bigger vehicles.

All of this results in plenty of collection and delivery work. Most sizeable towns and cities once had at least one laundry. I'm sure we can all remember a local concern in our own area, then there were a number of nationally-known companies, which took over many of the smaller local operators.

I spent some time in the late 1970s as an agency driver in south London and got 'lumbered' with the laundry job for a while. We covered holiday relief for the British Quantock laundry, based in Peckham. It was

**Right:** Spring Grove also used this Bedford-Scammell 'OSS' tractor unit, LEW 666 (Huntingdon, 1952). you can just see the Perkins badge under the radiator muff on fleet no 801 (not all the vehicles showed them). It was being backed onto one of two step-frame box trailers, fleet no 802, for the cameraman, by a mechanic, judging from the state of his overalls.





fine, if you had a good 'van-boy' as I had during my second and longer spell, who 'let you in gently', carrying the heavier laundry baskets or 'hampers' until you got used to them. I wonder where my mates, Jimmy and Micky are now?

We serviced hotels, restaurants and blocks of flats around the West End and beyond. The service entrances tended to be anything but 'user friendly', with steps, low entrances and, frankly, in some cases some of the filthiest floors and walls I have ever seen...

As for the vehicles, non-HGV Bedford TK and Ford D Series vans, on contract from another company, based 'under the arches' at Peckham station, they matched the fancy places' scruffy back doors very well. Still, it was fun racing round the city streets on 'job and finish' for a tenner a day

But back to the job in hand. Some laundries used vehicles with stylish or specialised bodywork – and still seem to – while others used fairly standard vans. We have a cross-section of them in our pictures here. Next time, we'll follow up with some memories from Ken Wilson, whose driving career included time working for Lakeland Laundries, some of whose vehicles are seen here..



**Above:** These two jolly chaps in their clean white coats are loading the Bedford's trailer with dry-cleaned coats, as well as hampers of laundry. One would have thought the overall weight, including the framework inside would have warranted more than the trailer's single wheels. The Bedford might have been intended to work with two trailers, but this labour-intensive manual loading, with the steps up into the trailer, would have nullified any efficiency achieved. The 'SW17' on the laundry hampers suggests these Spring Grove premises were in the Tooting area of South-west London. (CHC aay373)



**Right:** A workshop scene, but is this at Blox Services or Spring Grove's premises? I suspect the former, but we have two of the laundry's vehicles, an Austin K8 dropside, used by the company's engineering department, fleet no 137, but we don't know the registration, as the grille and presumably the bumper with the front plate are sitting in the body, and UHX 169 (Middlesex, 1949), which looks like an integral van. There's a Morris PV van to the left as well, possibly not one of the laundry's vehicles. (CHC aay203)

**Left:** The driver looks on as the mechanic attends to his Commer 25 cwt van, LKL 375 (Kent, 1949), presumably in a corner of the laundry yard. It looks as if more than a wheel-change is going on. Spring Grove's vehicles were evidently on contract hire from Blox Services of Mitcham, well-known in this business for many years, whose Ford E83W service van has been brought by the mechanic. Notice the London Transport RTL, seen approaching along the road over the fence. (CHC aay202)







**Above:** Here is another Spring Grove engineers dept van, a Morris ½ tonner, based on the first post-war Oxford, fleet no 19, SPC 480 (Surrey, 1952). The fact that it's been pictured at Blox Services garage, presumably in Mitcham – the name is still used by a garage in Farnborough – suggests the original article for which the pictures were taken was about contract hire. There are signs for contract van hire and self-drive car hire in the windows. (CHC aay378)



**Left:** It looks as if Purewhite Laundry Services was allied to Spring Grove. Here, at its premises in Totterdown Street, just off Tooting High Street, SW17, the company's Austin K2 'Loadstar' van, fleet no 302, SPE 679 (Surrey, 1952) looks as if it is being loaded with laundry for return to customers. (CHC aay204)



**Above:** Another Purewhite vehicle, a Karrier Bantam integral van, fleet no 202, SPC 950 (Surrey, late 1952), is picking up laundry from an agent, possibly a newsagent/tobacconist, in a suburban street. The term 'Bagwash' referred to a type of laundry in which the washing was returned to the customer in a bag, undried and unpressed. Notice the Bedford 'O' van in the background, lettered for 'OK Sauce'. (CHC aay200)

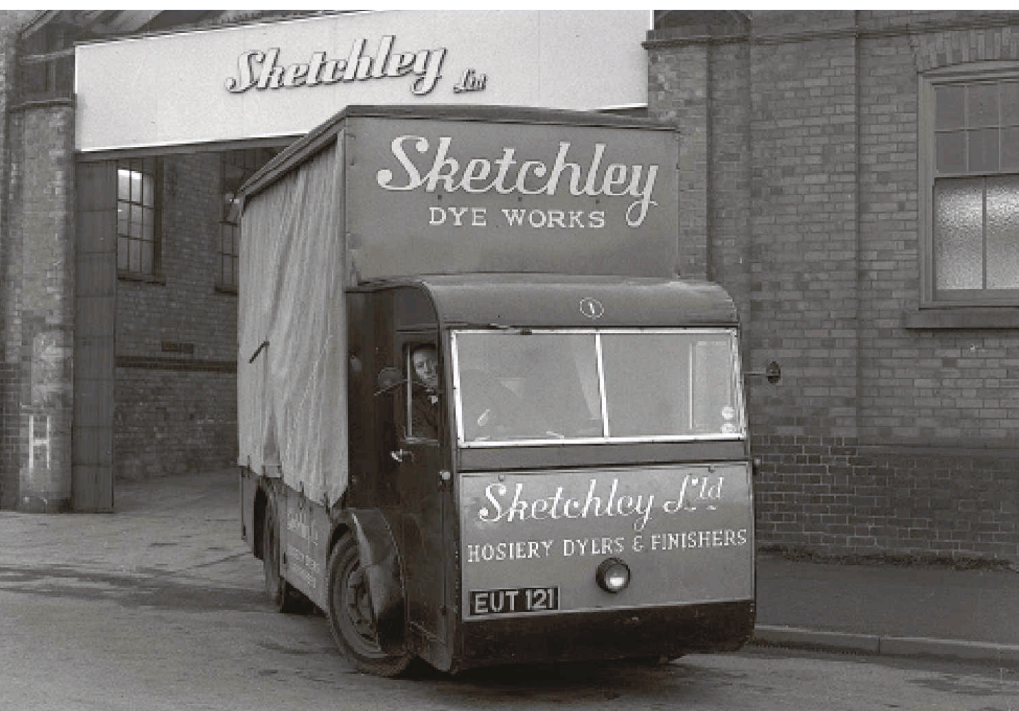
**Below:** Staying in the London area, here is another name remembered from the past, White Knight Laundry, in Kensal Road, W10. Its Commer BF 30 cwt, with a coachbuilt body offering increased internal height, as well as the more streamlined look, fleet no 25, SYF 631 (London, 1956), is parked outside the company's premises (CHC aaz054)







Above left and right: Here's another well-known name, though perhaps more associated with dry-cleaning than laundry. The hampers on the floor of the van show that the company 'did the washing' too and other pictures show both clothes being hung on rails and hampers being loaded through the side doors of the Luton body. Here the van is unloading at night, outside one of the company's branches. The Fordson Thames ET6, HNR 121 (Leicestershire, 1952), on which the head office is given as Hinckley, looks rather like a removals van, with its drop-well and lowered tailboard at the rear, as well as the doors on both sides. (CHC aar531 and 525)



Left: This looks like a vehicle used around the Sketchley works, rather than for deliveries. EUT 121 (Leicestershire, 1948) looks like a Morrison Electrician, more usually found on a milk round, but here with a curtain-sided body, in which boxes of part and fully-finished goods were transferred between departments. (CHC aar 523)

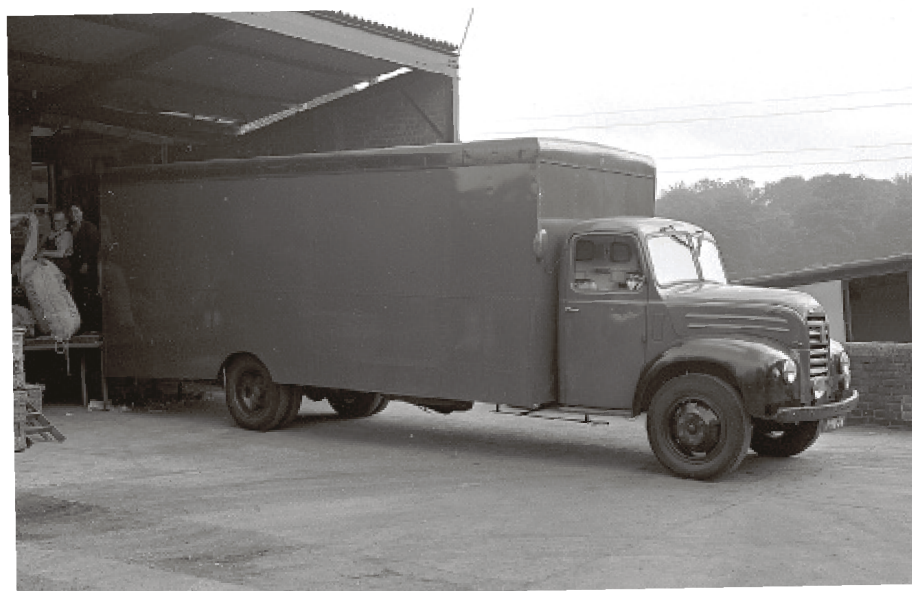
Below left and right: aah746 and abh021  
A couple of later Sketchley vehicles are seen taking part in the Lorry Driver of the Year competition. They show a change of style of livery for the company, as well as a change to (arguably) more stylish coachbuilt bodies. SOU 767 (Hampshire, 1957) carried a BMC Diesel badge below the screen, so was presumably based on an Austin/Morris FE chassis, while XNR 760 (Leicestershire, 1961) looks as if it was based on an Albion Claymore underfloor-engined chassis. I don't think it would have made it between those posts at that angle... (CHC aah746/abh021)







**Above:** Another company to try for a stylish vehicle (and again, you might say, not quite pull it off) was Martins The Cleaners. A Commer Avenger coach chassis was most likely the basis of YUB 193 (Leeds, 1957), with its Ford Perfect grille, wrap-around screens and multiple side doors. Behind is more traditional Thames 4D, UUB 375 (Leeds, 1955). (CHC aas188)



**Left:** Another Thames 4D, PWV 24 (West Riding, 1955) with a very long wheelbase and box body with rear doors only, is backed up to the loading bay, where there are hampers and sacks to be loaded. (CHC aas187)

**Below:** Achille Serre was based in East London, but was once well-known nationally as a company offering laundry, dry cleaning and associated services – even hiring of umbrellas by the day – from up to 400 branches, many later taken over by Sketchley. This picture from shows a couple of standard-bodied Austin K8 vans, including PEV 436 (Essex, 1949), on the right, along with a high top version, NTW 740 (Essex, 1948) in the company's fleet. Being loaded are some of the specially-impregnated door mats, which the company was well-known for supplying to both business and domestic users (including the editor's mother back in the 1960s). (CHC abj927)



**Above:** Martins was another cleaners which was photographed delivering to its shops at night, but here the Commer is seen entering the company's premises, showing off its attractive, but now rather dated-looking livery, with the its block letters and 'birdie' symbols. (CHC aas185)





**Right:** Achille Serre seems to have been another company to deliver to its shops at night and to use the Thames 4D with Luton body. Here 584 PPU (Essex, 1959) heads a line-up of at least seven similar vehicles, not all in the company's livery, including 665 BPU of 1954, being loaded with dry-cleaning and laundry for return to customers at the company's shops. (CHC abj932)

**Below:** As well as the Austin K8, Achille Serre also used the Morris PV, like HXY 92 (London, 1946-9), seen here delivering the parcels of clean laundry to a shop. (CHC abj934)



**Right:** We will have more about Lakeland Laundries of Lancaster and Kendal next time from Ken Wilson, who worked for the company, but here are some of its vehicles at the Lancaster loading bay. From the right, they are a Commer Superpoise, EO 9350 (Barrow-in-Furness, 1950), with a rather upright coachbuilt body, two electric vans, EO 6670 of 1937 and EO 8829 (1948), which was the smaller Morrison Electricar model, and another earlier Commer, with wheels which suggest it was based on an ex-military chassis. (CHC abl685)



**Above:** Another of the 1950 Commer Superpoise vans, EO 9331, is seen outside one of the company's shops in one of the Lake District towns. (CHC abl930)

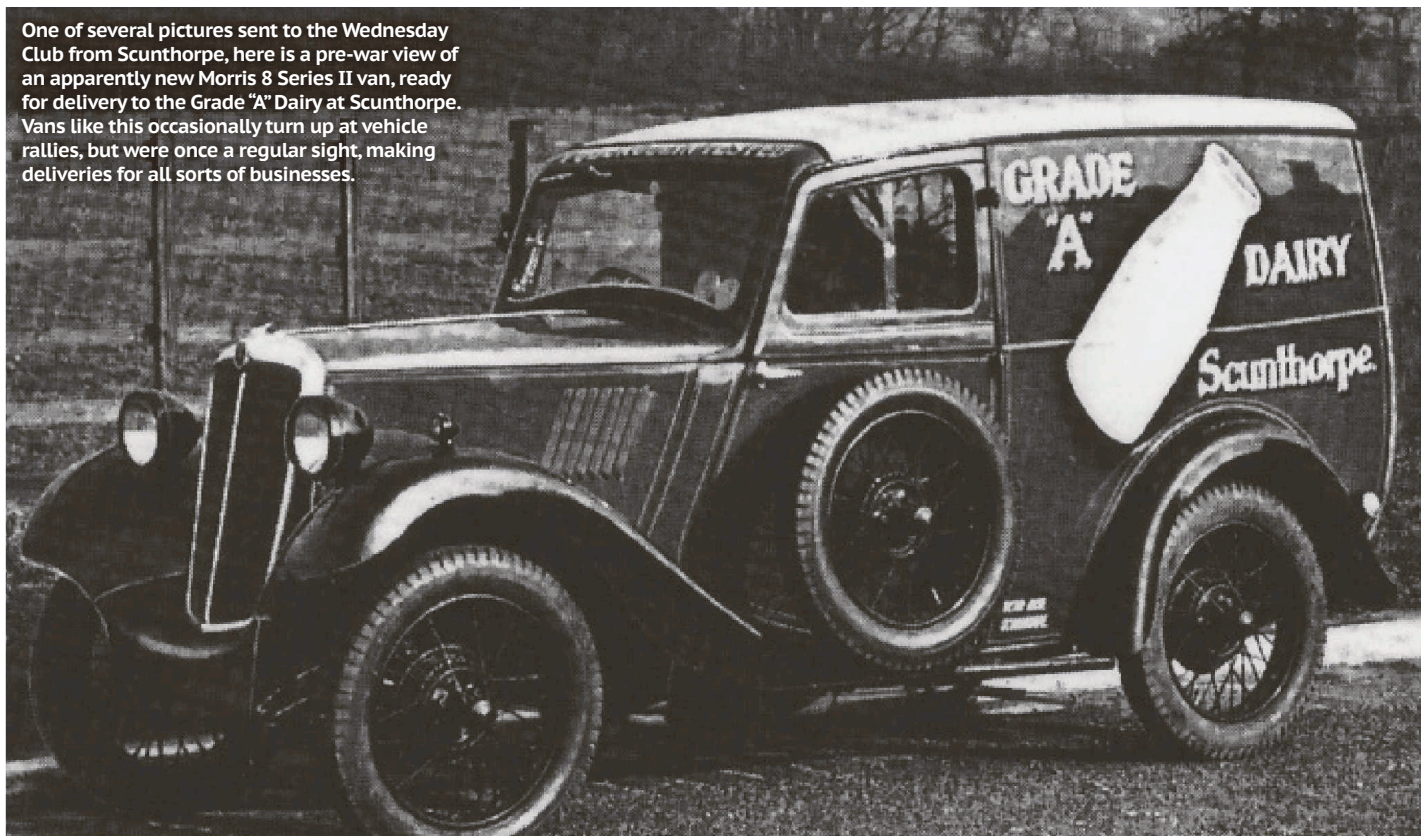
**Right:** I hope the driver wasn't kidding himself he could just walk through the front door of what looks like a grand hotel by the lake, rather than finding his way round the back, with that heavy-looking hamper. It makes my back ache just to look at this picture. More next time... (CHC abl693)





# More Memories from Grimsby

One of several pictures sent to the Wednesday Club from Scunthorpe, here is a pre-war view of an apparently new Morris 8 Series II van, ready for delivery to the Grade "A" Dairy at Scunthorpe. Vans like this occasionally turn up at vehicle rallies, but were once a regular sight, making deliveries for all sorts of businesses.



**Ray Newcomb** has sent us some more assorted memories, mainly from Grimsby and its immediate area, but with some interest further afield.

**R**ay and his colleagues, ex-drivers and transport professionals, get together regularly at their 'Wednesday Club' – which no doubt involves a fair amount of drinking tea and phrases like: "Do you remember when..." It also results in them not only finding old pictures, newspaper cuttings and other 'bits and pieces', but they are sometimes sent items by other people. Ray's occasional 'Bygones' column in the 'Grimsby Telegraph' probably has some thing to do with this as well.

Here are some interesting pictures, which mostly have a general thread linking them with our gallant band and their past. It would be interesting to hear from other like-minded groups in other parts of the country – any offers...?



**Above:** Ray says that Doug Holloway started up several companies, including North Lincs Haulage, Consolidated Land Services and others in the Scunthorpe and Immingham areas of North Lincolnshire. H & L Haulage Ltd – Holloway and Lavery – was another, which had a base in Workington, judging from the signwriting on the door and the 1967 Cumberland registration, LRM 283E, of this Guy Invincible artic.





**Above:** A much later picture of a vehicle in the Consolidated fleet, not surprisingly with a load of steel on the 'trombone' extending trailer, behind the Mercedes-Benz 2025 6 x 2 tractor unit, one of dozens run by the company over 20 years or so. The same firm sold Mercedes lorries at H & L Garages, Killingholme, near Immingham.

**Left and below:** Humber Warehousing later became part of Humber McVeigh, which bought a number of Guy tractor units, six-wheel flats and tippers and four-wheelers for its 1972 fleet replacement programme from Killingholme Vehicle Services, before the company changed to supplying Mercedes-Benz.

INTRODUCING

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Service to customers is all-important to Humber McVeigh Transport. To ensure this service, they chose Guy tractor units, six-wheel flats and tippers, and four-wheel flats for their 1972 fleet replacement programme. Supplied by Killingholme Vehicle Services

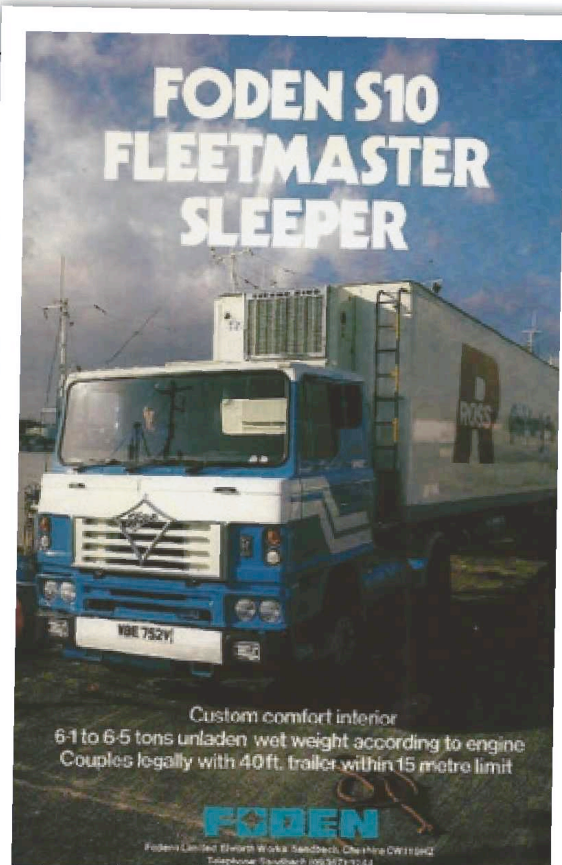
*For YOUR fleet replacement  
contact Barry D. Bright, Managing Director*

**KILLINGHOLME VEHICLE SERVICES LTD.**  
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**Above:** A press cutting showing two vehicles of L van Gaeve, a Belgian haulier, a Scania Vabis and an AEC Mandator, with a locally-built cab, in Antwerp, pulling 'four-in-line' trailers belonging to McVeigh Transport, before the two companies merged, with refrigerated containers of Ross Frozen Foods for export.





**Above:** A later Foden advert, showing a 1979-80 S10 Fleetmaster tractor unit, with a refrigerated trailer, in Ross Foods colours.

**Above left:** This is possibly a Mitchell Cotts publicity picture, taken in Grimsby, with Ross House in the background. Mitchell Cotts provided Ross Foods with vehicles on contract. This Mercedes-Benz 1626 tractor unit, dating from the same year as the Foden in the advert, was George Dixon Senior's lorry for a time.

**Left:** George Dixon Senior later also used this rather tired-looking slightly earlier T-registered DAF 2500 on shunting duties when Mitchell Cotts Services the Ross Foods contract.





**Right:** No longer required, an ex-Ralph Williams of Grimsby early 1970s ERF 'A' Series tractor unit, also seen at Kevin Dennis's yard. These two pictures featured in one of Ray's 'Bygones' columns.

**Middle right:** The remains of an ex-Ross Foods Scammell Handyman tractor unit, seen at rest in the graveyard at Kevin Dennis's Wainfleet premises.

**Below:** A period advert from Ford & Slater, announcing the company's new premises in Macaulay Street in Grimsby. The company obviously dealt with quite a range of different makes of vehicle, Leyland, Albion, Vauxhall-Bedford, Daimler, Trojan and Perkins engines. Long-term readers will remember Alan Fixter's stories from his time with this company...



**FORD & SLATER (LINCS.) LTD.**  
ANNOUNCE THE OPENING OF NEW PREMISES IN GRIMSBY  
★ ★ AT MACAULAY STREET TEL. 57181/2 ★ ★

Commercial Vehicle & Motor Engine Specialists

**Leyland**  
The famous LEYLAND COMET "80" range of trucks, which is used by many and more contractors in all corners of the British Isles, and export demands "you" that the "COMET" is giving equally good service overseas. Through address covering you are in a position to offer good delivery of most goods. May we send you pictures of the vehicles which will give you "more getting value per year" - 1976 LEYLAND COMET.

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**FORD & SLATER (LINCS.) LTD.**  
(THE DIESEL SPECIALISTS)  
MACAULAY STREET - GRIMSBY - Telephone 57181/2

**Try out the Daimler CONQUEST**  
FOR ASSURANCE, VALUE OF FINANCING, COMFORT

**PERKINS**  
FOR PROVEN, RELIABLE, LOW COST, maintenance, spare parts and service facilities, call 57181/2. Please specify: COMMERCIAL AND DOMESTIC ENGINE RANGE.

**ALBION**  
We have pleasure in announcing our conversion to EUROPEAN STANDARDS EXCEEDED TO A HIGHER LEVEL, and a CONTEMPORARY design to suit all needs, and to look forward to meeting the needs of all clients.

**TROJAN**  
We have pleasure in announcing our conversion to EUROPEAN STANDARDS EXCEEDED TO A HIGHER LEVEL, and a CONTEMPORARY design to suit all needs, and to look forward to meeting the needs of all clients.

**SALES SERVICE SPARES**  
**FORD & SLATER (LINCS.) LTD.**  
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MACAULAY STREET - GRIMSBY - Telephone 57181/2

**SALES SERVICE SPARES**  
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28 Grimsby Telegraph Monday, March 9, 2015

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DUO: Unusual 'Chinese six' wheeled Leylands on Alpine Transport distribution contracts.



WILL TURNED CUFFY V8s alloy wheels running right and left air horns, this Cummins 320 Foden had all the looks of a transporter, built by Brumpton, of Barnetby, Lincolnshire.

## On the road with lorry photographs

**T**his selection of lorry photographs was chosen to us by local lorry enthusiast Ray Newcomb, of Yarmouth Road, Grimsby. Our thanks to him. If you have old photographs showing vehicles belonging to local companies, then we'd love to see them. You can e-mail them to [bygones@grimsbytelegraph.co.uk](mailto:bygones@grimsbytelegraph.co.uk) or send them to Bygones, Grimsby Telegraph, 80 Chequer Road, Grimsby North, East Lincolnshire DN14 3AP.



View more Bygones online at



**Left:** One of Ray's 'Bygones' columns, showing George Dixon Senior's Mercedes, along with an unusual mid-1980s 'Chinese six' Leyland Freighter conversion, C310 TAD, designed to avoid front axle overloads, for Alpine Transport's distribution contract with Bird's Eye Foods, and a well turned-out Cummins 320-powered Foden, C255 JFW, with alloy wheels, extra lights and air horns from the fleet of L.J. Brumpton of Barnetby, Lincolnshire.

**Right:** Granville Tours was part of the Blackburn Group, along with Norfolk Motor Services, based in Great Yarmouth - notice the address, Norfolk House, Welholme Road, Grimsby. This early 1970s Bedford-Duple was typical of this fleet and so many others at the time - while the same could be said of the advert...

**Far right:** Ray rented a flat in Burza Bruga in Malta and met Kevin Dennis for a day out. This was a typical street scene, where the houses had accommodation above the garages (what a good idea...) The Hillman Hunter was like new...




**Right:** McVeigh Transport bought out Lightfoot Bros of Liverpool in 1957, during a programme of expansion. This Leyland-powered Bedford S Type artic was one of ten in the fleet. It appears to have been loaded with bales for the textile mills, in this picture from one of Ray's 'Bygones' columns.

**Below:** Who said there were no Octopuses left in the Med? A few years back now, in May 2009, the driver had parked up at the ferry terminal on Gozo late in the day, taking the ferry back on foot and returning for an early delivery the next day. He said 18-25 tons was the normal weight of the loads of pre-cast building slabs he carried. Red and green seems a general colour scheme on Maltese lorries – does anybody know why? Notice the minimal number of load restraint straps...





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Although used by other operators, this stylish emblem will always be associated with Salopia the PSV operator. Salop is an alternative name for Shropshire and the 'ia' ending refers to 'things of the county'. The name signifies that there were ambitions beyond Whitchurch from the beginning. Saloon Coaches would, at the time the phrase was adopted, imply a quality product.



**Alan Price** relates the history of a well-remembered coach operator based in Shropshire. Other pictures of the company's vehicles were featured in the first *Vintage Bus & Coach* album we produced, which prompted this article...

In the mid-twentieth century, the small North Shropshire market town of Whitchurch, although only having around 5,000 inhabitants, prided itself on the number of successful medium-sized businesses based in the area. One of the most remarkable was Salopia, a coach and bus business which, at its peak, operated around 60 vehicles. The writer grew up in the village of Calverhall, roughly five miles east of the town and, from 1935 to 1959, witnessed the Salopia success story at first hand.

In 1946, when the writer first met 'Harry' – HWB – Richards, the driving force behind the Salopia story, the fleet already consisted of 19 vehicles. By the early 1960s, the company had

grown to around 80 road staff, operating 60 vehicles, by local standards, a major employer. The majority of the staff were drivers, but there were around 12 conductors and an inspector, the company's second ambassador at large – Harry Vaughan.

### Earlier Years

The Richards family had been involved in bus and coach operation since World War I. J R Richards, the owner of an Ironmonger's in Green End Whitchurch, was persuaded in 1916 by one of his sons 'Harry', at that time in his teens, to operate a service from the huge military camp on nearby Prees Heath to Whitchurch. This operation lasted until 1919/1920. Two vehicles were involved, a very

second-hand Wolseley-Siddeley and a much larger Selden, an American vehicle which at times ventured as far away as Rhyl.

After the war, with the closure of the camp, only hire cars were operated until 1926, when a partnership, trading as J R Richards and Sons, but made up of Harry and his two younger brothers, commenced operations, under the name Salopia. By 1929, the company was operating the coach tours for which it was to become best known in the wider industry although, from the start, there was always a substantial group of market day services, plus excursions and private hire, to be joined post-war by daily time-tabled stage services, together with school and works services.



**Above:** Salopia No17, a 1936 Leyland LZ2. Compare this with a 1920s Midland Red SOS, which would have been the vehicles competing for Calverhall traffic on Fridays in the late 1930s...



**Right:** Fleet No12, the writer's favourite 'Salopia', a Thornycroft Cygnet with a 32 seat coach body by Shearings, which was in the fleet from 1935 until 1952.

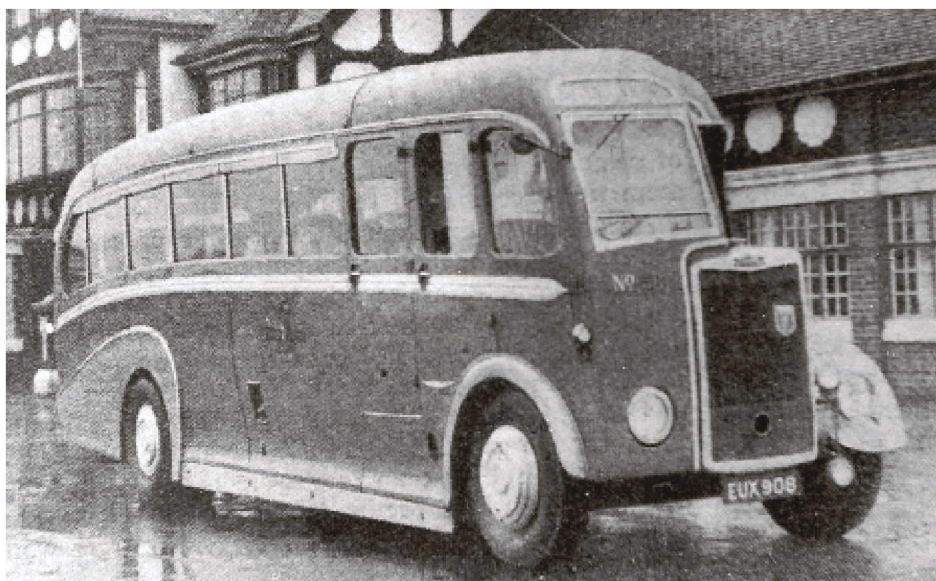
## Services to one 'Salopia village' – by way of example

For almost all the period covered, Salopia was the only operator serving Calverhall. But for a few years before World War II, Midland Red provided one return journey to Whitchurch on a Friday, at a cheaper price, but with far inferior vehicles.

Then the overall service pattern reflected a by-gone world! Weekly services commenced with a Market Day service, for six miles further east, to Market Drayton on a Wednesday at 9 am, with two return journeys in the afternoon. On Friday, it was the turn of Whitchurch to have a Market Day service, commencing with a 10 am journey, with two return journeys in the afternoon. Saturday was altogether different: services for many years started with a 5.10 pm to Whitchurch and continued hourly until 10.10 pm. Around that time, agricultural workers were generally paid around 4 pm on a Saturday! As Saturday gradually became a half-day, the service was progressively altered

to commence at 2.10. Post-war, the village even gained a daily service (see later).

The same vehicles tended to remain on the same workings for long periods. The journeys into Market Drayton on a Wednesday and Whitchurch on a Friday were, for most of the war years, operated by No 21, a Dennis Lancet of 1938 vintage, with the two return journeys operated by smaller vehicles.



## The fleet pre-war

Of the first 15 vehicles purchased, 11 were Thornycrofts, of which at least five remained in the fleet until after World War II. Reasonably typical in a more mixed fleet, when it came to bodies, was No 12, a Cygnet with a 32 seat coach body by – wait for it – Shearings, which was in the fleet from 1935 until 1952. Having very good power to weight ratios, these petrol vehicles were fast and smooth. On Whit-Monday, 1951, with Clarence Ellison at the wheel, No 12 'walked away' from a number of post-war diesel vehicles – including a Leyland PS2 – all having left Llanberis for the Pass together.

In the mid-1930s, Salopia took over Chesworth's, one of the more substantial of the smaller local operators. This brought a number of vehicles of other makes, such as Guys and Dodges, into the Salopia fleet, plus significant stage carriage services, including the Saturday evening Calverhall service.

## The War Time years

Two Leyland Cheetahs with Santus bodywork were purchased in 1936/7. These, the later Thornycrofts and the three new Dennis vehicles became the back-bone of the rapidly-expanding wartime fleet. One of the Cheetahs at least was still doing coach tour work into the 1950s. Early in the war, a number of second-hand Leylands passed rapidly through the fleet. Only No 31, an LT1 dating from 1929, survived the arrival of Bedford Utilities from 1942. This early Lion

**Top left:** Salopia No 58, a TSM K6MA7. The second of only two Tilling Stevens, which was in the fleet from 1949 to 1954. It was probably purchased on the record of the other Tilling Stevens, No 32, a B10A.

**Bottom left:** The Parking Ground at Whitchurch, with coaches including Salopia Crossley No 56, on Market Day services. The Parking Ground was the town's Bus Station for around half a century.



Salopia No 51, a Foden PVSC6 with an SEAS bus body, closely related to some re-bodies on Crosville Tigers of the same period. This vehicle was for many years the regular choice for the Whitchurch- Market Drayton daily service.



reputedly had a cracked block and when it staggered out on duplication(!) on the Calverhall services, it had to have its radiator replenished from the duck pond at Ash Parva, with the help of a watering can.

Not all the second-hand vehicles purchased to meet the surge in demand were so unsuccessful. They joined the fleet to help when military bases were built all round the area and the farmers and their wives had, in the absence of petrol, to join their workers on the service buses. An unlikely success was No 32, a TSM B10A, dating back to 1931, which for a considerable period worked a Saturday diagram, starting with a Shrewsbury via Hodnet, before going on to the afternoon Calverhalls. Its working companion was No 33, another Thornycroft Cygnet, dating back to 1934, but this time second-hand. No 33 had a sufficiently superior coach body (by Thurgood?) to be able in the immediate post-war period to also undertake such work as the regular excursions to the Speedway at Belle View, Manchester, a run of a good 45 miles each way.



**Middle right:** Salopia No 95, the only second-hand Bedford OB in the fleet. This was one of the OBs which replaced Crosville Leyland Cubs on the services crossing the weight-limited original Conway Bridge. This vehicle served Crosville from 1947 to 1954 and then Salopia until 1968. Its position in the Parking Ground suggests that it was on the 'Round the Polish Camps' service.

**Bottom right:** Salopia No 60, a Beadle-bodied Sentinel STC, which was the normal vehicle for Salopia's share of the direct Shrewsbury service. Its position in the 'independent' area of the Shrewsbury bus stances suggests that, when photographed, it was on one of the long-standing Market Day Saturday services to Shrewsbury, in which Midland Red was not involved.





## The Austerity Years

Although now remembered as a coach tour operator, during the war years and the period of post-war austerity, Salopia continued to develop a substantial stage operation, really building up its extended tours once more in the 1950s, but in parallel with its then still considerable stage operations. During the early 1950s the stage operation consisted of: -

The traditional market day services; this network of routes serving a different North Shropshire town each day was usually operated by coaches.

A daily two-hourly Whitchurch to Market Drayton service, mostly covered by No 51, a Foden PVSC6 with an SEAS bus body.

A daily – unusually including Sunday – service linking the various resettlement centres in the area from where the Polish Army, which had fought with the British in Italy, was demobilised. This was usually covered by a Bedford OB bus. Unlike the other Willibrew-equipped routes, these services used Bell Punch tickets. The fact that the amount of the fare they had paid disappeared into the ticket machine being too complicated to explain to our Polish friends. The staff usually referred to this service as “Round the Polish Camps”!

A group of services jointly run with Midland Red, between Whitchurch and Shrewsbury – in pride of place was a direct service via the main A49, usually operated for Salopia by No 60, a Sentinel STC. At times, this was an hourly service.

The second arm of this group of services was a less direct service, via Wem. The Salopia vehicle normally did not operate beyond Wem, where it ‘kissed and turned’ with a Midland Red vehicle, transferring any through passengers. I seem to recollect that there were through Salopia journeys on a Sunday at one stage, and that the main road direct service did not run on Sundays. These ‘Wem’ services were normally covered by an OB Bus.



**Above:** Salopia No 69 one of the Bedford OB buses, of which there were four in the fleet. This vehicle served North Shropshire and South Cheshire from 1949 to 1961. Its position in the Parking Ground suggests that it had arrived from Wem.

During the late 1940s-early '50s, some of the larger and more affluent local villages, such as on the Ash/Ightfield/Calverhall and Tilstock/Wixhall routes, enjoyed a daily return journey to Whitchurch, in addition to the traditional market day services. Indeed, for a period, these routes enjoyed an evening service to Whitchurch on a Wednesday Evening, in addition to the long-standing Saturday services. These weekday services could attract either an OB Bus or one of the other service buses, such as No 49, a Burlingham bus-bodied Lancet, or No 55, a Crossley SD42/7, with a similar Burlingham body.

## Vehicle Purchases during the Austerity Years

In the immediate post-war period, Salopia seems to have followed many other operators in purchasing whatever was available, with

a tendency to favour suppliers from the part of the country in which Salopia was based. Between 1946 and 1952, there was a total of 47 new vehicles purchased, of which 19 were Bedfords. The remaining 28 vehicles included six Dennis Lancets, six Fodens and nine Crossleys, although four Crossley coaches with Santus bodies only remained in the fleet for a short time. (There were unsubstantiated rumours at the time, linking some of the above concerns, plus Salopia and local bodybuilders, such as Metalcraft, with a local financier-entrepreneur called Gleaves, who controlled Smiths of Wigan for a period).

## Moving On

During the 1950s, Salopia became well-known for its fleet of Whitson-bodied Foden half-decks. Although used on tours, they were also much in demand for private hires. These were the days of the ‘village outing’; an entire community would ‘up sticks’ for the day and invade a local seaside resort. Organisers rapidly worked out that the Fodens, some of which appeared at various coach rallies, were

**Salopia No 49, the only bus-bodied Dennis Lancet. There were two of these Burlingham bodies. The other was on No 55, a Crossley SD42/7. Both spent 14 years in the fleet.**





a draw in their own right! In addition, the last three seated as many as 39 passengers – a lot in the early 1950s. Four to six more participants per hired vehicle improved the economics of the outing. At times, the company attempted to charge a premium over the other coaches, but organisers in the know soon learnt that an appeal to Harry Richards in person would normally get it waived.

## The Driving Force

Harry was Salopia – his brothers, Len and George, were only just visible – appearing in the legal lettering as Company Secretary and with a desk in the main open-plan company office at Green End. In addition to his company activities, Harry, who had been in the Royal Flying Corps in World War I, was at various times Chairman of the West Midlands Area of the Trustee Savings Bank and, as such, the head of the area National Savings Drive during World War II.

These activities produced an OBE, followed by a CBE. More locally he was Vice-Chairman of the local authority, a President of the Rotary Club and Chairman of the Governors of the local Tudor Grammar School. In the bus and coach industry, he occupied various positions on the trade bodies of the day. And yet, should a local village be holding a fund-raising concert, he would be pleased to give a rendition of a monologue, such as 'Albert and the Lion', to a standard which we knew was better than Stanley Holloway.

On one spring morning in 1951, the school bus was late. When it eventually came round the end of Darlington's barn, we saw that it was our old friend of the war years, No 21, the first Dennis Lancet in the fleet and that the driver was none other than Harry himself. We were pleased to see a much larger vehicle than the usual OB, which regularly loaded well above its nominal capacity, even with the notorious three 'children' to a seat and eight standing rules taken to account. But we were incredulous that Harry had got No 21 down the narrow lane from Burleydam. Harry, holder of all the offices and honours listed above, left his half-cab to



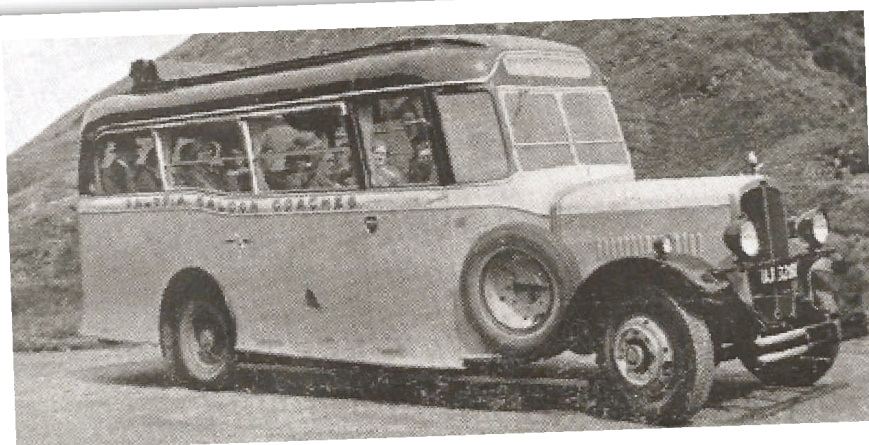
**Above:** No 80 the first of the then famous Whitsun half-deck bodied Fodens. The least popular with the drivers, it was a PVFE6 and regarded as under-powered.



**Above:** No 91 was the last of the Fodens, a PVRF6, which only worked for one 'COF' (Certificate of Fitness, the first normally granted for seven years) in the fleet. It is standing at the rear of the pre-war garage, just before the massive extension of the site. A 39-seater in 1952 – for a time it was the pride of the fleet.



**Above:** There were seven OB coaches in the fleet. They were the normal type of vehicle on the school contract referred to in the text, but they did their share of coach holiday work, before motorways came into use.



**Above:** No 7 was a coach holiday vehicle from the early days. It has been suggested that it appears to have been photographed in the car park at Pen y Pass near Snowdon.

apologise to us children for being late(!) and to request that we cooperated with him to catch up the lost time, explaining that the vehicle was needed for another job at 09.00 hrs and that the entire fleet was fully committed to work in connection with the Festival of Britain. A cheekier companion said: "Mr Richards, bet you won't be able to turn round at Upper Woodhouses with this." "Well, what do you suggest?" was his unexpected reply. We showed him the unofficial turning point in the drive of the local big house, worked the manual





**Left:** No 168 was a Duple-bodied Bedford SB, which only did one season with Salopia. Touring to Ireland, it shows the 'finish' of a Salopia tour coach in the early 1960s.

**Below:** A picture of 'Harry' Richards in his prime, from the Rotary Club of Whitchurch history. HWB died in 1979 and left a substantial sum for the benefit of Whitchurch.



passenger door effectively – vital passenger co-operation on a single-manned half-cab and no 21 took up its next job only a few minutes late.

We had seen a successful business man showing his professional skills. As the 1950s progressed, Harry's and Salopia's attentions became more and more focused on the coach holiday side of the business.

## The Final Phase

The first coach holiday had been operated as far back as 1929, carrying 21 passengers, using one of the early Thornycrofts, almost certainly No 4, an A6 with 'Shearings' bodywork. The following year, 93 passengers were carried. By 1965, 13,000 passengers per year were being carried, from a catchment area stretching from Denbigh in North Wales to North Cheshire, via the Wirral, then on to the North Staffordshire Potteries, the industrial area in South-east Shropshire and the county town of Shrewsbury.

By this time, the orientation of the depot had been reversed so that the cramped entrance from Green End had been replaced by one in St John's Road, the depot having been extended over the intervening sites. The new forecourt of the depot became a 'Coach Station' on Sundays. Up to 21 coaches departed in the morning and a different 21 coaches returned in the afternoon, with the previous week's passengers.

Departures and arrivals were always in the presence of a director of the company, usually HWB himself or his right-hand man, general manager, Tom Davies. The directors made it their business to personally greet as many customers as possible.

The returning coaches were deployed on local work, valeted and serviced before they returned to touring a week later. At this period the turn-out of the coaches on tour was immaculate, petrol Bedfords being the usual choice through the pre-motorway 1960s, diesels being regarded as 'too rough' for Salopia's customers! Vehicles were changed very regularly. Between 1956 and 1971, approximately 200 vehicles were bought and, in most cases, sold. The vast majority were Bedford coaches but the total included six mini-buses, two Commers, and seven Bedford service buses.

By 1971, the company was more and more dependent upon its tour work, local stage was in decline, contract work was more and more competitive, with various smaller operators appearing and, above all, HWB Richards CBE was 72. The company was sold to Gold Case Travel, although even then there were rumours that it had been sold to the Shearings/Pleasureways Group. Gold Case Travel was a subsidiary of the Ellermann Shipping Line and best-known for the Beeline fleet in the North-east. It ran Salopia

much as before, even transferring some work, mainly engineering, to Whitchurch. But, in 1979, Salopia did pass to Shearings and, after short period which saw Shearings' Plaxton/Fords on Calverhall services, the Whitchurch services came to an end. The last the writer heard, a Community Transport Scheme was running a mini-bus from Calverhall to Market Drayton on a Wednesday and Whitchurch on a Friday – which is more or less where we came in.

*\* I no longer have an accurate record of the source of the individual photographs. The majority are from Roy Marshall, others from T W W Knowles and R H G Simpson of Kensington, Oxford. In compiling the text, use has been made of the Omnibus Society record of the company, Commercial Motor articles and The Whitchurch Rotary Club website.*



Valeted coaches standing in the Tour Departure Area of the extended depot. No 214 was a Bedford SB5. The picture was probably taken during the Beeline period. The evidence is the lack of a Salopia emblem and different legal lettering. The vehicle stayed in the fleet for longer than had been the practice in HWB's later years.



# The Ards TT Circuit

## - A Vintage Roadscene in Rural Ulster

*Peter Johnston has been researching the background to the picture of the Shelvoke & Drewry Freighter being used for road surfacing work in County Down.*

**T**he SD Freighter platform lorry was fitted out as a tar sprayer or 'flapper'. A little more detail can be seen in the second picture, although it has not reproduced very well.

The SD was working with a road gang, preparing for the 1929 RAC Tourist Trophy race, which was held over the Ards circuit, between 1928 and 1936. The course ran from the Elk Inn at Dundonald, over Bradshaw's Brae, through Newtownards and Comber, back to Dundonald, over 13 miles. The law in Northern Ireland, the Republic of Ireland and Isle of Man allows public roads to be closed so that motor sport events can take place.

The pictures were taken on the A20 Belfast to Newtownards road, now a dual carriageway, near Quarry Corner, Dundonald. The work was being done after complaints from drivers in the 1928 event about the condition of the surface.

In my opinion if ever there was a 'Vintage Roadscene', this action-packed image of the 'Surface Dressing Operation' on the A20 is what this magazine is all about.

Surface dressing has always been considered among the most simple and straightforward of construction processes, where a thin film of binder, covered with aggregate chippings, is used to seal and re-texture an existing surface and so arrest disintegration of the carriageway.

Where is Ulster? It is the most northern of the four provinces of the Island of Ireland and it includes the six counties of Northern Ireland (which is part of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland) and three border

The picture of the SD Freighter tar sprayer which started it all. It was last seen in a field somewhere on the Ards peninsula 20 years ago. Peter would like to find it for possible restoration...



counties of Cavan, Donegal and Monaghan which are in the Republic of Ireland.

In this Rural Ulster Vintage Roadscene we have the SD tar sprayer, XI 3137; a steam roller – more about that in a moment – a horse drawn farm cart delivering gritstone (Greywacke) chippings, possibly from Moore's Quarry at Ballybarnes; from the quarry, it was two miles down hill to where the surface dressing was taking place; blue collar road workers (two right handed one left handed); white collar supervisors (would the gentleman on extreme right be the Clerk of Works?) employed by Down County Council (1898-1973) to ensure that the work complied with the agreed specification. His boots are well polished; would he have been one of the fortunate soldiers who

got home again from World War I? Local Authorities gave preference to ex-servicemen at that time when appointing staff.

What does a Clerk of Works do? In this case, the Clerk of Works' main responsibility was to make sure the work was carried out to Down County Council's specification for the surface dressing, which would have been prepared by the County Surveyors

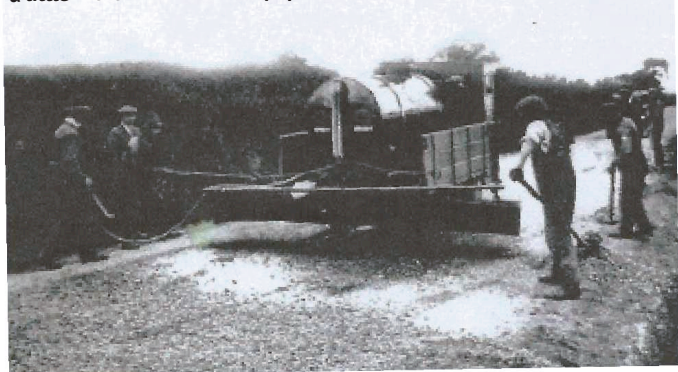
engineers, 30 miles away in Downpatrick. The work was undertaken by a contractor, Irish Cold Bitumen, based in Belfast, the manufacturers of Colfix binder.

The Clerk of Works' role on site was to oversee that the correct materials and workmanship were used and that the County Council was given quality work and value for money. At times it would have been a lonely existence for the Clerk of Works, requiring tact and diplomacy, to be known to have integrity, be intelligent and vigilant in the performance of his duties and to have a practical knowledge of the skills required in the undertaking of the works in hand.

Andy Wells of Maidenhead tells us that, although the registration of the roller in the background looks like IA 7153, it is probably actually IA 7158, which was carried by Wallis & Stevens No 7246, a 12 ton single cylinder roller, supplied new in 1912 to George Gregg & Sons, of Glarryford, near Larne, a company which had a large fleet of 48 engines from 1894 to 1956. Wallis No 7246 was sold to Mayo County Council at an unspecified date, along with two others, of which one still exists.

In the second image, work is underway on the Surface Dressing Operation with Colfix binder, the first workman on the left has a hand lance, the second gentleman is what I consider to be the Clerk of Works and the third workman has an extension pole to operate the valve on the tanker

A view of the SD Freighter from behind, showing a little more detail of the equipment.





to control the volume of binder going on the carriageway. The flow of the binder would appear to be by gravity. To assist this the tanker would appear to be on an upward incline.

HT Harvey of Minis in Ireland, based in Lisburn, tells us that the XI registration series of numbers was allocated to vehicles registered in Belfast and ran from July 1922 to November 1932 - this would tend to show that the SD Freighter was registered sometime around 1925.

The IA registration series of numbers was allocated to vehicles in County Antrim commencing June 1921. From other information on vehicles with IA 71 registration numbers, he has found that they were issued in 1924.

McCreath Taylor, which represented SD in Ireland, has restored a tar boiler, with the help of Patsy Connolly of Shantonagh in Co Monaghan. McCreath Taylor was a tar importer at the time and would have supplied the tar in 40 gallon drums or timber barrels to the road contractor, from its tar works at Northern Road in the Harbour Estate, Belfast.

We have two pictures supplied by Simon Thomas of Comber, Co Down, showing the Ards TT circuit around the same time. He also sent us a copy of an article by the late Billy Galbraith, who attended the races as a schoolboy. He said: "millions of spectators lined the 13.7 mile circuit, returning year after year, to see the races which had international prestige. The Ards Circuit had many natural grand-stands alongside, which made it an excellent spectators' course. They would camp out all night to ensure a good vantage point.

**Vans of the Belfast Telegraph lined up at the pits before the 1929 race. They include Renaults and possibly Chambers and Crossleys. (Simon Thomas collection)**



**The start of the Ards RAC Tourist Trophy race in 1928. The cars can be identified as a Mercedes, Sunbeam, Bentleys, Bugattis and other vintage treasures. (Simon Thomas collection)**



**The tar boiler which Mc Creath Taylor, of which Peter Johnston is Chairman, has restored, behind the company's SD Freighter, loaded with tar barrels and drums, the only SD Freighter restored in Ireland – so far...**

"Among recorded opinions were:-

'The ideal course. It had all the features of a long road which one would meet on a tour, hence its perfect suitability for the T.T.' – Prince Chula of Siam.

'The course is difficult but with an excellent road surface. I find the Dundonald hairpin the most difficult of its many corners' – Rudi Caracciola.

'The circuit is one of the most interesting in the world, tricky, requiring accurate judgment above all things, yet fast, and with a nice sprinkling of those curves which give sheer joy when taken exactly right, and everywhere -wide enough to make passing easy' – S C H (Sammy) Davis.

"The motor cars themselves created an impression which has survived for over 50 years (writing in 1973). Even today, it is not difficult

to find elderly people with no interest in modern motor cars who recall the screaming white German Mercedes, the thunderous roar of the Bentleys and the ghost-like swish of the Talbots. The names of competitors are also remembered with affection,

and although complete accuracy is not always achieved with regard to pronunciation, this can be excused. After all, even the modern sixth-form schoolboy might have to hesitate at Caracciola, Dittillaux, Borzacchini or Nuvolari. Kaye Don, Earl Howe, Henry Birkin, Malcolm Campbell and E R Hall, however, present no difficulty.

It seems almost incredible, when one reflects on the skill, courage and endurance which was demanded of these men, driving their cars at speeds of up to 120 miles per hour and maintaining an average of 80 mph over such a hazardous course for approximately five hours. It is little wonder that vivid memories live on, and it is right that the people of North Down should feel proud of the part they have played in writing such an important chapter in the history of motor racing."

## Vintage

■ A reader could well ask for a definition of 'vintage'. Here is a breakdown of what FIVA (Federation Internationale des Vehicules Anciens) class as a historic vehicle. FIVA is the international body which represents the old car movement worldwide

■ FIVA defines a historic vehicle as a mechanically-propelled road vehicle, which is at least 30 years old; which is preserved and maintained in a historically correct condition; which is not used as a means of daily transport; which is therefore a part of our technical and cultural heritage

■ And the Age Classification

■ Antique Vehicles: built up to 31st December 1904

■ Veteran Vehicles: built between 1st of January 1905 and 31st of December 1918

■ Vintage Vehicles: built between 1st of January 1919 and 31st of December 1930

■ Post-Vintage Vehicles: built between 1st of January 1931 and 31st of December 1945

■ Classic Vehicles: built between the 1st of January 1946 and 31st December 1984



# The Heritage Transport Show

*Jim King went to this event at the Kent Showground at Detling on Saturday 28th March 2015*

**T**o clear up any confusion, this event has two titles and I have used the classic commercial vehicle label. However, if buses are your thing, the title is The South East Bus Festival, incorporating The Heritage Transport Show. Whichever side of the fence you are on doesn't matter, as this show has plenty to see and do for everyone.

This massive arena had it all covered, from old motor-cycles to steam engines and everything in between. There are also large buildings, housing trade stalls, models, memorabilia, club displays and rooms for the lectures and slide shows shown throughout the day.

In the lorry section, there were some highlights for me, with vehicles I had not seen before. The West family from Canterbury had brought along their recently-acquired 1932 Foden R Type, LG 9446, together with their ever growing stable of Fodens. This vehicle was well known in the Cheshire area, but I was very pleased to see it now housed down south.

John Jempson Haulage of Rye displayed its immaculately restored 1936 Commer, DYM 54, which had won best in show at last year's Sprat & Winkle run. Apparently, it used to be owned back in the 1970s by Nobby Clark of Vauxhall, London, well-known for running one of the oldest working vehicles in London with his 1971 Leyland Bear, who believe he is assisting the Jempsons in building up the lorry's history.

A fantastic pair of Volvos were shown by the



**Above:** The 1936 Commer dropside, DYM 54, of John Jempson of Rye, Sussex, at the Heritage Transport Show, Detling. This vehicle started life as a Luton van and has been completely rebuilt.

Home & Workshop Machinery Company from Sidcup, Kent. Firstly, a 1977 F89, MVA 370R, which spent the first ten years of its life working as one of the pioneers of the Middle East trips and secondly, a 1968 F86, VNP 545G, which

started life pulling tankers for Henry Edwards of South Wales.

Bill Thorburn from Rochester has been very busy recently with his 1944 Bedford OXC, PAS 587, which looked really fresh, compared with when I last saw it at Chatham Dockyard back in 2008. It is always a pleasure to witness the resplendent looking 1960 Commer QX, 206 HYB, of Graham Rye of Canterbury, whose bright colours uplifted an otherwise mostly overcast day.

Whatever your views on old buses I felt quite nostalgic seeing the Bedford QL-based ex-Maltese bus, 312 YUK, as I have fond memories of travelling on them, during holidays in Malta in May 2009 and 2011, just prior to their removal from the roads, replaced by new Arriva vehicles. Sure, safety and pollution are important issues, but it was like ripping the heart out of the island's transport system. I hope the locals are a lot happier with a cleaner and more comfortable network to travel on.

I don't know why, but I have never attended this meeting before, but that is something I intend to change in the future. Thank you to everyone concerned for putting on a great show.



**Above:** The 1932 Foden R, LG 9446, which has moved south to David West of Canterbury, Kent.





1: The West family were at Detling in force with their Fodens, David's 1955 OG4-6, TTV 810, and Oliver's 1952 FG6-7, KHO 130, as well as the 1932 R Type. 2: One of the fire engines present at Detling was 163 GKP, a 1959 Commer 86A-HCB, originally with Kent Fire Brigade. 3: Giving rides around the showground, as part of the bus rally, was 312 YUK, an ex-Malta bus, where it was registered DBY 364, surprisingly based on a Bedford QL chassis. 4: The 1936 Bedford WLG, BBJ 929, of Ron Down of Ashford, Kent. 5: Also giving rides was CAP 229, a much-rebuilt open-top 1940 Bristol K5G ECW H30/26R, which once plied its trade on Brighton seafront. 6: Two ex-London Morris LD ambulances, CYH 540C of 1965 and PYP 516E of 1967, show detail differences to their Wadhams coachbuilt bodies. 7: Volvo F86, VNP 545G, F89, MVA 3670R, with its lifting third axle, sit alongside a very different commercial, YK 6426, a 1925 Morris-Commercial One-tonner. 8: The 1957 Ford Thames 300E, SOY 545, and early-1960s 305E, now registered 320 UXY, of A J Nash & Son of Maidstone, Kent, offer a comparison between the models.



# 17th Kirkby Stephen & Brough Classic Commercial Rally

*Keith Baldwin and Barry Fenn visited this show at Easter, 4-5th April, 2015.*

**K**eith says: "Well, Easter has arrived, so it's time to dust off the camera and head for the Eden Valley, for this annual Easter rally.

"After a misty start to the morning, the sun was soon out and a pleasant day was had by all. This is a mixed vehicle rally and a good number of vehicles attended. It is held on four different sites, with a free vintage bus service operating to link the different sites, although the timetable soon went out of the window...

"It seemed to me that many more vehicles were at the rally, along with some sales stalls, and there were plenty of visitors."

**Right:** The immaculate 1945 Scammell ballast tractor 'Clyde', DYS 319, one of the vehicles brought over by E & N Ritchie from Hetton-le-Hole, County Durham. (Pictures 1-5, Keith Baldwin)

**Below:** Another from the North-east was the Commer six-wheeled tipper, with its TS3 diesel engine, 398 JBB, beautifully rebuilt in the livery of Vaux Breweries by Frank Willis.







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1: The 1975 Atkinson Borderer tractor unit, GRN 575N, of H P Thompson & Son, of Chester-le-Street. 2: A vehicle seen at many rallies around the country is the 1959 AEC Mammoth Major six-wheeler, 778 MNU, of Rob Towse of Newport. 3: Among the buses present was this 1982 Leyland National Series B, without the roof 'pod', SHH 389X, restored in Western SMT colours. 4: A 1972 BMC FG-based box van, XVE 916L, probably now serving as a horse-box, seen at Kirkby Stephen on 5th April. (Pictures 4-8, Barry Fenn) 5: This 1954 AEC Regent bus chassis, OTV 178 (ex-Nottingham?) was converted with a new cab and beaver-tail in 1964, and also carried a horse-box at one time. It was seen at Brough. 6: A restored 1970 ex-Royal Mail Morris 1000 van, JFB 42H, seen at Kirkby Stephen. 7: An Austin A70 Hereford pick-up, MXL 642, dwarfs the Austin A35 pick-up between it and the equally rare Jowett pick-up. 8: The Austin A35 pick-up, 5 DTN, dating from 1957, complete with wire wheels, was used for racing in the late-1950s, and is now owned by Alex and Angela Steel, who showed it at Kirkby Stephen at Easter.



# 13th Festival of Steam & Transport, Historic Dockyard, Chatham, Kent.

*Jim King* went to this event, held Easter Sunday/Monday 5-6th April 2015.

The 1948 Peterbilt, registered 234 YUK, used by the Duel Fuel Company with a trailer, kitted out as a snack bar, seen at Chatham Dockyard.



**T**his event has the advantage of being held at the Historic Dockyard at Chatham, which is worth visiting any time, regardless of whether a vehicle show is being held there or not. The Festival takes place over two days although I only visited it on the Sunday. Now in it's 13th year, the organiser, Alana Marie Almond and her team have developed this event into a marvellous family trip out, with copious

amounts of things to see and do.

I have visited many shows that actually have more commercial vehicles in attendance, but this does not distract from the plethora of other types of transport available for your perusal. How unique can it be to be served your refreshments on the day from the back of a 1948 Peterbilt, 234 YUK, refurbished as a replica of the lorry in the 1971 film 'Duel' and, in honour of the director of the film, Steven Spielberg you

can even order a 'Spielburger' and fries. Now that's what I call clever marketing...

Highly appropriate, was Raymond Mount's 1935 Ford AA, AOT 117, which was parked outside The Dockyard Commissioner's House and looked every part as if it were making a delivery there. Nearby was parked a 1991 ERF E10, H895 TWP, that was used to power the Chairplane fairground ride. This took me right back to my childhood memories – and it is worth a mention that all the rides were included in the admission price on the day.

A very rare vehicle was Mr. Herbert's 1958 Berna L4, KSU 871, originally built in Switzerland and, after a complete restoration that took some four years, in 2008 it took part in a 2,500 mile road run to Poland. With an 8.8 litre engine, I dread to think what his fuel bill must have been for a trip of that magnitude.

When looking at the picture of the 1957 Ford Thames 5cwt, SOY 545, owned by A.J. Nash & Son of Maidstone, you can be forgiven for thinking that you recognise the backdrop, as it was used whilst filming the television drama series, 'Call the Midwife'.

With the exception of aeroplanes, and I maybe wrong, I do not think there is any mode of transport's history that is not simultaneously covered by this event. Hats off to everyone concerned.



**Above:** Outside the Dockyard Commissioner's House was AOT 117, the 1935 Ford AA of Raymond Mount of Rainham, Kent.





**1:** The backdrop behind this splendid line-up of classic vehicles, was used for the television drama series, 'Call the Midwife'. **2:** This 1963 Austin Gypsy, 336 KOM, seen approaching Chatham Dockyard, was originally used by Morris Motors Fire Brigade. **3:** One of two Bedford CA ice cream vans at Chatham was EMA 620F from 1968. **4:** The 1958 Berna L4, now registered KSU 871, of A Herbert of Slade Green, Kent, at Chatham Dockyard, alongside a Scammell ballast tractor. **5:** One of several fairground vehicles at Chatham was 1991 ERF E10.325, H895 TWP. **6:** 1941 A wartime Austin K3 from 1941, now registered GSK 611, belonging to Paul Chapman of Aylesford, Kent at Chatham Dockyard, alongside a more recent military Land Rover. **7:** A 1975 Alexander AV-bodied Volvo Ailsa B55, LKP 385P, from the Maidstone & District fleet, now owned by the Historic Dockyard. **8:** The 1971 Bedford TK, XKN 529J, with a beaver-tail body, of Robert Royce of Brick Cottage, Medway Town, Kent.



# Ton up at Jack's

*Jim King and Mike Forbes went to the 4th Jack's Hill Café Gathering, near Towcester, Northants on Sunday 19th. April 2015, where there were very nearly 100 classic vehicles...*

**T**his is the fourth year that Glen McBirnie has run this event at Jack's Hill Café, on the A5 Watling Street, just north of the intersection with the A43 at Towcester and to coin a phrase from a well known vehicle manufacturer this was "The best four by four by far", having just shy of 100 classic vehicles in attendance. Glen's fears of this show becoming too popular were almost realised, as the lorry park was full almost to capacity, but from an enthusiasts prospective it was a sight to behold.

The eclectic mix of vehicles ranged from vintage motor-cycles through to big rigs and, had an alien landed on this spot on the day, they would have been forgiven for thinking that their time clock was out by some 30 years or, so such was the ambience of the place.

Inside, there were stalls displaying various models, books and photographs. The main room was full of like-minded people, chatting about all aspects of transport and tucking into the fine fare provided by the lovely owner of Jack's, Su Capella who, with her dedicated team, made sure that everyone had an efficient and friendly welcome at the establishment. Although they must have been shattered by the end of the day, all the staff were beaming from ear to ear and I truly believe that the day was enjoyed by everyone there.

One of the early arrivals was John and Janet Ayre, in their 1952 Morris Commercial LC3 (627 YUK), which was a lovely surprise as only last month they had thrown a valve, while attending their own show down at Newbury. Some midnight oil must have been burnt to get it back on the road so quickly. They both carry out some sterling work on behalf of the Historic



**Above:** 863 YUK The ex-MIRA 1958 Scammell Junior Constructor, 863 YUK, of Willi Flomer of Leamington Spa, Warks, makes it into the vehicle park after some hard work, at Jack's Hill Café, on the A5 at Towcester, Northamptonshire.

Commercial Vehicle Society (HCVS), so it was good to meet up with them again.

I bet Willi Flomer had wished he had arrived earlier as he had to manoeuvre his 1958 Scammell Junior Constructor (863 YUK) around in a tightly packed yard whilst displaying plenty of the old 'armstrong' principle. This vehicle has spent most of its previous life on the MIRA test bed in Nuneaton and hence only has a few hundred miles on the clock from new.

There were many lorries that I would love to have taken home with me and, with a life-long fondness for Ford Thames Traders, Chris Judge's 1964 (AHR 291B) and Bernie Bailey's Transport

(1022 PW) brought across from Attleborough in Norfolk, come to mind. However, the vehicle of the day for me has to be John Cleaver's 1954 AEC Mammoth Major tanker (JET 855), driven over from Chipping Norton, as I am still a sucker for a heavy eight-wheeler.

A special thank you to Jim Read and Stuart Clarke for their merriment and superb marshalling on the day, together with the many volunteers also assisting, and thanks to all the entrants that took the time and effort to attend.

By the way, Glen, don't worry about this event becoming too big, because it's a cracker. Well Done mate...



**Above:** Bernie Bailey's Ford Thames Trader FC, 1022 PW, came over from Attleborough, Norfolk.



**Above:** The 1964 Ford Thames Trader FC Mk 2, AHR 291B, of Chris Judge, seen outside Jack's Hill Café.





1: Queuing to get in, EBJ 661, the 1940 Fordson E88W van of Ian Bartlett of Rugby, Warwickshire, follows two ex-military vehicles, an Austin K9 and a Scammell Explorer, into Jack's Hill Café vehicle park. 2: Always a star of the show, JET 855, the 1954 AEC Mammoth Major 8 Mk III of Francis John Cleaver of Chipping Norton, Oxon, seen leaving Jack's Hill Café. 3: Looking in fine fettle, the Commer QX, MNM 328, of D Stewart of Toddington, Bedfordshire, sits at the front of the café with the Ayres' ex-Telephones Morris-Commercial. 4: The oldest vehicle present was this lovely Ford Model 'T', which was catching everybody's eye. 5: They were all crammed into the vehicle park, but this nice-looking Bedford K Type was hardly overwhelmed by the Fodens, Scania and other lorries old and not so old. 6: Almost too well-restored, but still lovely to see this Bedford QL, which typifies so many ex-military breakdown lorries. 7: Atkinsons, ERFs and so many more, all packed in together, making the vehicle park look like that of a really popular lorry stop – oh yes, so it is. A visit to Jack's Hill Café is recommended at any time, but especially to this gathering. 8: A nicely-restored 1955 Land Rover, PEW 251, pulls into Jack's Hill Café to join the fun.



# Rally Diary

*A selection of events being held during the coming month which will be of interest to Vintage Roadscene readers*

The 2015 rally season is up and running now, so here are the events scheduled to take place while this issue of the magazine is current. If you're organising an event which would be of interest to Vintage Roadscene readers, please let us know the details for future diary pages,

and we apologise if we've missed any out.

Let us hope the weather is kind and everyone enjoys their days out, wherever they go. Don't forget to take your camera and if you see anything interesting, send us a picture for our future Rally Scene pages...

## MAY

**16 May – The 1940s Relived**, Brooklands Museum, Brooklands Road, Weybridge, Surrey, KT13 0QN, 01932 857381  
e-mail: [events@brooklandsmuseum.com](mailto:events@brooklandsmuseum.com)  
[www.brooklandsmuseum.com](http://www.brooklandsmuseum.com)

**16 May – Running Day** (buses only) Scottish Vintage Bus Museum, Lthlalmund, Dunfermline, Fife KY12 0SJ, 01383 623380  
e-mail: [eddie-taylor@tiscali.co.uk](mailto:eddie-taylor@tiscali.co.uk)  
[www.svbm.org.uk](http://www.svbm.org.uk)

**16-17 May – Bidford-on-Avon Vintage Gathering**, Big Meadow, Honeybourne Road, Bidford-on-Avon, Warwickshire B50 4PQ, 01789 778248 e-mail: [sue12@hotmail.com](mailto:sue12@hotmail.com)  
[www.bidfordvintagegathering.co.uk](http://www.bidfordvintagegathering.co.uk)

**16-17 May – Mid-May 40s Weekend**, East Anglia Transport Museum, Chapel Road, Carlton Colville, near Lowestoft, Suffolk NR33 8BL, 01502 518459  
e-mail: [eastangliatransportmuseum@live.co.uk](mailto:eastangliatransportmuseum@live.co.uk)  
[www.eatm.org.uk](http://www.eatm.org.uk)

**16-17 May – Bill Targett Memorial Steam & Vintage Rally**, Highbridge Farm, Allbrook, Eastleigh, Hampshire SO50 6HN, 01794 512331  
e-mail: [khawkins@aol.com](mailto:khawkins@aol.com)  
[www.billtargettrally.co.uk](http://www.billtargettrally.co.uk)

**16-17 May – Pickering Country Fair & Tractor Show**, Pickering Showground, North Yorkshire YO18 8EA, 01751 200839  
e-mail: [info@outdoorshows.co.uk](mailto:info@outdoorshows.co.uk)  
[www.outdoorshows.co.uk](http://www.outdoorshows.co.uk)

**16-17 May – Anglesey Festival of Transport & Machinery**, Anglesey Agricultural Showground, Mona, Gwalchmai, Anglesey LL65 4RW, 07776 006111  
e-mail: [angleseyvintage@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:angleseyvintage@hotmail.co.uk)  
[www.angleseyvintagesociety.co.uk](http://www.angleseyvintagesociety.co.uk)

**16-17 May – Neath Steam & Vintage Show**, Llwynfelish Farm, Neath Road, Crynant, near Neath SA10 8SP (formerly at Cefn Coed Colliery) 07971 167651

**16-17 May – Classic Vintage Vehicle Weekend**, Great Central Railway, Quorn Station, Quorn, Leicestershire LE12 8AG, 01509 632323  
e-mail: [michaelstokes@gcrailway.co.uk](mailto:michaelstokes@gcrailway.co.uk)  
[www.gcrailway.co.uk](http://www.gcrailway.co.uk)

**16-17 May – Vintage Excavator Working Weekend**, Threlkeld Quarry & Mining Museum, near Keswick, Cumbria CA12 4TT, 01768 779747  
e-mail: [threlkeldquarrymuseum@btconnect.com](mailto:threlkeldquarrymuseum@btconnect.com)  
[www.threlkeldquarryandminingmuseum.co.uk](http://www.threlkeldquarryandminingmuseum.co.uk)

**16-17 May – Military & Home Front Event**, Amberley Museum & Heritage Centre, Station Road, Amberley, near Arundel, West Sussex BN18 9LT, 01798 831370  
e-mail: [office@amberleymuseum.co.uk](mailto:office@amberleymuseum.co.uk)  
[www.amberleymuseum.co.uk](http://www.amberleymuseum.co.uk)

**16-17 May – Heavy Horse & Country Show** – incl Historic Wheels, East Byshee Showground, off A22, Lingfield, Surrey RH7 6LF, 07799 191013  
e-mail: [ken@historicwheels.co.uk](mailto:ken@historicwheels.co.uk)  
[www.historicwheels.co.uk](http://www.historicwheels.co.uk)

**16-17 May – Six Hills Steam Transport & Family Show**, Six Hills, near Wyneswood, Melton Mowbray, Leicestershire LE14 3LY, 07901 984627  
e-mail: [dave.hoyles@ntlworld.com](mailto:dave.hoyles@ntlworld.com)  
[www.themidlandseventclub.com](http://www.themidlandseventclub.com)

**16-17 May – Three Okefords Rally & Show**, Blandford Road, Shillingstone, Dorset DT11 0SQ, 01258 861473  
e-mail: [topsltd@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:topsltd@hotmail.co.uk)  
[www.threeokefordspreservationsociety.co.uk](http://www.threeokefordspreservationsociety.co.uk)

**17 May – Spring Classic & Cream Tea Run**, Heritage Motor Centre, Banbury Road, Gaydon, Warwickshire CV35 0BJ, 01926 645029  
e-mail: [shows@heritage-motor-centre.co.uk](mailto:shows@heritage-motor-centre.co.uk)  
[www.heritage-motor-centre.co.uk](http://www.heritage-motor-centre.co.uk)

**17 May – Wirral Classic Car Show**, Royden Park, Frankby, Wirral, Merseyside CH48 1NJ, 07899 756903  
e-mail: [k.glass@btinternet.com](mailto:k.glass@btinternet.com)  
[www.wirralclassiccarclub.co.uk](http://www.wirralclassiccarclub.co.uk)

**17 May – Lincoln Castle Rally**, Castle Hill, Lincoln LN1 3AA, 01522 500566  
e-mail: [info@lvvs.org.uk](mailto:info@lvvs.org.uk)  
[www.lvvs.org.uk](http://www.lvvs.org.uk)

**17 May – Woodhall Spa Country Show**, The Show Field, Green Lane, Woodhall Spa, Lincolnshire LN10 6QY, 07811 145052  
e-mail: [jcmichael27@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:jcmichael27@yahoo.co.uk)  
[www.woodhallspashow.co.uk](http://www.woodhallspashow.co.uk)

**17 May – Isle of Wight Festival of Transport**, Isle of Wight Steam Railway, Havenstree, near Ryde, PO22 4DA, 01983 882204  
e-mail: [info@iwsteamrailway.co.uk](mailto:info@iwsteamrailway.co.uk)  
[www.iwsteamrailway.co.uk](http://www.iwsteamrailway.co.uk)

**17 May – Chiltern Hills Vintage Vehicle Rally**, Weedon Park, Weedon Hill, near Aylesbury, Buckinghamshire HP22 4NN, 01296 681530  
e-mail: [j\\_masters@btconnect.com](mailto:j_masters@btconnect.com)  
[www.chilternhillsrally.org.uk](http://www.chilternhillsrally.org.uk)



**22-24 May – Strumpshaw Steam Rally**, Strumpshaw Hall, near Brundall, Norwich NR13 4HR, 01462 851711  
[www.strumpshawsteammuseum.co.uk](http://www.strumpshawsteammuseum.co.uk)

**23-24 May – 32nd AEC Society Annual Rally** (Bomber Country road run on Saturday), Newark Showground, Nottinghamshire, 07504 974776  
e-mail: [rally@aecsociety.co.uk](mailto:rally@aecsociety.co.uk)

**23-24 May – Commercial & Bus Weekend**, Dundee Museum of Transport, Market Street, Dundee DD1 3LA, 01382 455196  
[www.dundeeuseumoftransport.co.uk](http://www.dundeeuseumoftransport.co.uk)

**23-25 May – Smallwood Vintage Rally**, A50 Newcastle Road, Smallwood, near Sandbach, Cheshire CW11 2TX, 01782 511477  
e-mail: [brendachallinor@btinternet.com](mailto:brendachallinor@btinternet.com)  
[www.smallwoodvintagerally.co.uk](http://www.smallwoodvintagerally.co.uk)

**23-25 May – Ashley Hall Traction Engine Rally**, Ashley, Altrincham, Cheshire WA14 3QA, 01751 200839  
e-mail: [info@outdoorshows.co.uk](mailto:info@outdoorshows.co.uk)  
[www.outdoorshows.co.uk](http://www.outdoorshows.co.uk)

**23-25 May – Launceston Steam & Vintage Rally**, Trebant Farm, Altarnum, Launceston, Cornwall PL15 7RR, 01566 775879  
e-mail: [secretary@launcestonsteamrally.com](mailto:secretary@launcestonsteamrally.com)  
[www.launcestonsteamrally.com](http://www.launcestonsteamrally.com)

**23-25 May – 38th Enfield Pageant of Motoring**, The Playing Fields, Great Cambridge Road (A10), Enfield, Middlesex EN1 3PL, 0208 367 1898  
e-mail: [whitewebbsmuseum@aol.com](mailto:whitewebbsmuseum@aol.com)  
[www.whitewebbsmuseum.co.uk](http://www.whitewebbsmuseum.co.uk)

**23-25 May – Selwood Steam & Vintage Rally**, Southwick, near Trowbridge, Wiltshire BA14 9RJ, 01373 466846  
[www.selwoodvintage.co.uk](http://www.selwoodvintage.co.uk)

**23-25 May – Cuckoo Spring Fayre**, Laughton Showground, Laughton, East Sussex BN8 6BN, 01323 811264  
e-mail: [laughtonshowground@gmail.com](mailto:laughtonshowground@gmail.com)  
[www.hertiagefield.co.uk](http://www.hertiagefield.co.uk)

**23-25 May – Weekend Trolley Days**, The Trolleybus Museum, Belton Road, Sandtoft DN8 5SX, 01724 711391  
e-mail: [trolleybusmuseum@sandtoft.org](mailto:trolleybusmuseum@sandtoft.org)  
[www.sandtoft.org](http://www.sandtoft.org)

**23-25 May – Chipping Steam Fair**, Green Lane Showground, Chipping, Preston, Lancashire PR3 2TQ, 01995 61866  
e-mail: [chippingsteam@aol.com](mailto:chippingsteam@aol.com)  
[www.chippingsteamfair.co.uk](http://www.chippingsteamfair.co.uk)

Please check details with organisers before travelling long distances. Vintage Roadscene publishes this listing in good faith and cannot be held responsible for any changes or inaccuracies in the information given.



**23-31 May – Beside the Seaside**, Crich Tramway Village, Town End, Crich, Matlock, Derbyshire DE4 5DP, 01773 854321  
e-mail: enquiry@tramway.co.uk  
www.tramway.co.uk

**24 May – Bus & Coach Rally**, Rural Life Centre, Reeds Road, Tilford, Farnham, Surrey GU10 2DL, 01252 795571  
e-mail: helen@rural-life.org.uk  
www.rural-life.org.uk

**24-25 May – Transport Extravaganza**, East Anglian Railway Museum, Chappel & Wakes Colne Station, Wakes Colne, Essex CO6 2DS, 01206 242524  
e-mail: keith.chadwick@earm.co.uk  
www.earm.co.uk

**24-25 May – Abergavenny Steam & Vintage Rally**, Bailey Park, Park Road, Abergavenny, Monmouthshire NP7 5PR  
www.abergavennysteamrally.co.uk

**24-25 May – 23rd Ragley Hall Classic Car & Transport Show**, Ragley Hall, Alcester, Warwickshire B49 5NJ, 01922 643385  
e-mail: transtar@talk21.com  
www.transtarpromotions.com

**24-25 May – Festival of Country Life**, Lampport Hall, Lampport, Northamptonshire NN6 9HD, 01604 686272  
e-mail: admin@lamporthall.co.uk  
www.lamporthall.co.uk

**24-25 May – 57th Carrington Rally Steam & Heritage Show**, Carrington, Boston, Lincolnshire PE20 7DZ, 07702 208518  
e-mail: enquiries@carringtonrally.co.uk  
www.carringtonrally.co.uk

**30 May – Lincoln Autojumble**, former RAF base, Hemswell, Lincolnshire DN21 5TJ, 07816 291544  
e-mail: lincolnautojumble@hotmail.co.uk  
www.lincolnautojumble.com

**30-31 May – South Molton Vintage Rally**, Coombesland Cross, South Molton, Devon EX36 3NW, 07974 026060  
e-mail: lindaregan@talktalk.net  
www.smoltonvintagerally.co.uk

**30-31 May – St Albans Steam & Country Show**, Oaklands College, A1057 Hatfield Road, St Albans, Hertfordshire AL4 0XR, 07896 555097  
e-mail: chairman@hertssteam-dwh.demon.co.uk  
www.hertssteam.org

**30-31 May – Tinkers Park Steam Engine Rally**, Hadlow Down, near Uckfield, East Sussex TN22 4HS.  
e-mail: info@tinkersark.com  
www.tinkerspark.com

**30-31 May – Woolpit Steam**, Warren Farm, Wetherden, Stowmarket, Suffolk IP14 3JX, 01449 737443  
www.woolpit-steam.org.uk

**30-31 May – Heskin Steam & Vintage Rally**, Heskin Hall, Wood Lane, Heskin, near Chorley, Lancashire, 01257 267433  
e-mail: nuttyslack@hotmail.co.uk  
www.heskinsteamrally.co.uk

**30-31 May – Festival of Transport, Whites Nurseries**, Clay Lane, Earls Barton, Northamptonshire NN6 0EP, 01604 811633  
e-mail: enquiries.festivaloftransport@gmail.com  
www.festivaloftransport.net

**30-31 May – Castle Combe Steam & Vintage Rally**, Castle Combe Racing Circuit, Wiltshire SN14 7EY, 01454 294117  
e-mail: pauline.day1@tesco.net  
www.castlecombesteamrally.co.uk

**31 May – Land Rover Heritage Drive to Eastnor Castle**, near Ledbury, Herefordshire HR8 1RL, 01697 451883  
e-mail: info@markwoodwardclassicevents.com  
www.4x4sparesday.co.uk

**31 May – Tavistock Steam & Vintage Fair**, Wharf Car Park, Plymouth Road, Tavistock, Devon PL19 8AT, 01752 878968  
e-mail: rodney.ford@hotmail.co.uk  
www.thebreytrust.co.uk

**31 May-1 June – Innishannon Steam & Vintage Rally**, Innishannon, Co Cork, Republic of Ireland, 00353 21 477 5808

## JUNE

**5-7 June – Mid-Suffolk Vintage & D-Day Anniversary**, Stonham Barns Showground, Pettaugh Road, Stonham Aspal, Stowmarket, Suffolk IP14 6AT, 01449 711111  
e-mail: grace@stonham-barns.co.uk  
www.stonhambarns.co.uk

**6 June – Lurgan Show**, Lurgan Public Park, Co Armagh BT67 9BG, 0283 8881974  
e-mail: michele.doran@btinternet.com  
www.lurganshow.co.uk

**6 June – Vale of Avalon Vintage Road Run**, Bretenoux Road, Glastonbury, Somerset BA6 8DY, 07828 463288  
e-mail: daphne.stone@tesco.net  
www.valeofavalonvintagevehicleroadrun.co.uk

**6-7 June – Vintage Vehicle Show**, Shropshire Showground, Berwick Road, Shrewsbury, Shropshire SY1 2PF, 01952 770985  
e-mail: dereksheddyc@gmail.com  
www.midshropshirevintageclub.com

**6-7 June – Burford Rally**, Rough Grounds Farm, Lechlade, Gloucestershire GL7 3EU, 07825 774055  
e-mail: info@burfordcollectorsclub.co.uk  
www.burfordcollectorsclub.co.uk

**6-7 June – Gardner Engine Rally**, Bugsworth Basin, near Whaley Bridge, Cheshire, 01270 780093  
e-mail: gardnerengineforum@blueyonder.co.uk  
www.gardnerengineforum.co.uk

**6-7 June – Weekend Trolley Days**, The Trolleybus Museum, Belton Road, Sandtoft DN8 5SX, 01724 711391  
e-mail: trolleybusmuseum@sandtoft.org  
www.sandtoft.org

**6-7 June – June Steam Party**, Klondyke Mill, Draycott-in-the-Clay, Staffordshire DE6 5GZ, 01543 491485  
e-mail: turner@tjerry9.orangehome.co.uk  
www.nsctec.co.uk

**6-7 June – North Rode Vintage Rally**, Station Road, Bosley, near Congleton, Cheshire CW12 2PH, 01625 614552  
e-mail: nigelmooss-nortrode@gmx.co.uk

**6-7 June – Tractor Fest**, Newby Hall, Ripon, North Yorkshire HG4 5AE, 07711 692378  
e-mail: ayers99@hotmail.co.uk  
www.theyva.com

**7 June – East Midlands Bus & Commercial Vehicle Rally**, Wollaton Park, Nottingham NG8 2AE, 07971 105491  
e-mail: simon@nottinghamheritagevehicles.co.uk  
www.nottinghamheritagevehicles.co.uk

**7 June – 100 Years of Southdown Buses**, Southsea Common, Southsea, Hampshire.  
e-mail: mail@southdown100.co.uk  
www.southdown100.co.uk

**7 June – Bromley Pageant of Motoring**, Norman Park, Hayes Lane, Bromley, Kent BR2 9EF, 01775768661  
e-mail: info@livepromotions.co.uk  
www.livepromotions.co.uk

**7 June – 33rd Tyne-Tees Commercial Run**, Stockton to Gypsies Green Stadium, Sea Front, South Shields, Tyne & Wear NE33 2LD  
www.hcvs.co.uk

**7 June – TT Mad Sunday Vintage Show**, Ballacreggan Farm, Port St Mary, Isle of Man IM9 5AY, 07624 496870.

**11 June – Bring Your Vehicle Night & BBQ**, Westward Travel, Wotton-under-Edge, Gloucestershire GL12 8RT, 07503 158132  
e-mail: mgaj@hotmail.co.uk

**13-14 June – South Tyne Traction Engine Rally**, Tynedale Park, Corbridge, Northumberland NE45 5AY 07968 121247  
e-mail: sttes@hotmail.co.uk

**13-14 June – Slaidburn Steam & Vintage Vehicle Display**, Hark to Bounty Inn, Slaidburn, Lancashire BB7 4EP, 01200 446605 e-mail: captmcnamee@gmail.com  
www.slaidburnsteam.co.uk

**13-14 June – Fraddon Vintage Rally & Country Fayre**, Penhale, Fraddon, Cornwall TN9 6NA, 017226 860439  
e-mail: info@cornishtractorclub.org.uk  
www.cornishtractorclub.org.uk

**13-14 June – The Dig for Victory Show**, The North Somerset Showground, Bathing Pond Fields, Wraxall, Somerset BS48 1NE, 07968 274480  
e-mail: info@digforvictoryshow.com  
www.digforvictoryshow.com

**13-14 June – Wiltshire Steam & Vintage Rally**, Rainscombe Park, Oare, near Malborough, Wiltshire SN8 4HZ, 01672 810534  
www.wapg.co.uk

**13-14 June – 36th Wrotham Classic**, Wings of the Morning Field, A20, Wrotham, Kent TN15 7AH, 01732 883733  
www.wrotham.org

**13-14 June – Astwood Bank Vintage Gathering**, S E Davis & Son, Sandhills Farm, Edgioake Lane, Astwood Bank, Worcestershire B96 6BG  
e-mail: peter@peterwaghorn.wanadoo.co.uk

**13-14 June – Belper Steam & Vintage Event**, Salterwood Meadows, Street Lane, Denby, Derbyshire DE5 8NE, 07803 902053  
e-mail: terry.belpersteam@gmail.com  
www.belpersteam.co.uk

**13-14 June – Father's Day Vintage Weekend**, Yorkshire Museum of Farming, Murton Park, Murton, York YO19 5UF, 01904 489966 e-mail: events@murtonpark.co.uk  
www.murtonpark.co.uk

**13-14 June – Classic Vintage Commercial Show**, Heritage Motor Centre, Banbury Road, Gaydon, Warwickshire CV35 0BJ, 01926 645029  
e-mail: shows@heritage-motor-centre.co.uk  
www.heritage-motor-centre.co.uk

**14 June – 20th Raby Castle Classic Vehicle Show**, Staindrop, near Darlington, Co Durham DL2 3AH, 01697 451883  
e-mail: info@markwoodwardclassicevents.com  
www.markwoodwardclassicevents.com

**14 June – Copythorne Steam & Vintage Vehicle Rally**, The Scout Field, Romsey Road, Copythorne, near Southampton, Hampshire, 02380 814102  
e-mail: joysellwood@outlook.com



## LEICESTERSHIRE HAULIERS

With regard to the letter in issue 186 from Tony Lawrence, which mentions Bircher Bros and A Fletcher, from Ibstock, here are some pictures of the companies' vehicles. There are AECs, Leylands, Bedfords and Seddons, supplied by the company I worked for in Leicester.

We supplied quite a lot of Seddons to different companies in the area, with the production of bricks and pipes and the local coalfields, companies like Tellis and Cresswell, J W Pallet, Whitmore and Ricking, Newbolds and there was also Whettones, the millers from Coalville.

A lot of small operators also worked on contract to Morris James on coal haulage.

The pictures show a smart-looking AEC Mammoth Major in the Bircher Bros fleet, EAY 255 (Leicestershire, 1947). There is also a picture in the ATPH/NA3T collection of another 1936 AEC, AAY 547, with a British Road Services headboard and roundel added to the livery; a Seddon Mk 5L, loaded with bricks, HJU 466 (Leics, 1951), seen outside the company's garage; three Seddons, parked up in the garage after a days work, with HJU flanked by MYC 644 and MYA 977 (both Somerset, 1950); A Maudsley, ENR 909 (Leics, 1948), all in the Bircher Bros fleet; a later Leyland Comet tipper, MJU 649 (Leics, 1955), with an unidentified AEC Mercury in the garage; an S type Bedford, VNR 517 (Leics, 1960) which looks to be loaded with bricks; and a Leyland Comet with







platform body, OJU 167 (Leics, 1957) from the fleet of A Fletcher, all based in Ibstock.

Also in issue 186, Mr Daulby mentioned Hush Puppy vans, which were based at the British Shoe Corporation's main distributon

centre in Leicester, like the Leyland-DAF 14.16 seen here. BSC was made up of a number of show companies, with shops under the names Freeman Hardy Willis, Dolcis, Lilly and Skinner, to name just a few.

## COLIN SHEARS

It is with deep regret that we report the death on 20 March of Colin Shears, a true pioneer in the hobby of bus preservation. His funeral took place at Exeter Crematorium on 9 April and was attended by a considerable number of mourners, including many from the vehicle preservation movement.

Colin purchased his first bus in 1956, a 1926 Austin 20 toast-rack from the Sidmouth Motor Company. This was soon followed by his favourite, a 1938 Leyland 'Tiger' TS8 with rare open-platform Craven bodywork from Exeter Corporation, which was used to convey his coffin at his funeral.

Over the ensuing years, he saved literally hundreds of commercial vehicles, helped through his acquisition in 1963 of a former aircraft hangar at Winkleigh, North Devon. This also enabled Colin to offer a safe haven to numerous vehicles belonging to fellow preservationists. He had a wealth of knowledge about older vehicles and derived great pleasure from mastering vehicles which are difficult to drive and also coaxing back into life vehicles that had lain dormant for many years. He was always affable, approachable and held in high esteem by all who knew him - he will be greatly missed.

Fortunately, his son Daniel has that same enthusiasm for old commercial vehicles and will ensure that Colin's legacy will live on through the West of England Transport Collection that he established in 1963.

**Philip Platt**





## BRADFORD BUSES

I thought you may be interested in a couple of observations relating to the 'Flea Market Find' piece about Bradford in issue 185. As a one time resident of Bradford, during the time these buses depicted were in operation, I can confirm that the photo of AEC Regent III/Weymann FKY 40 was taken at the side of Thornbury Depot/Works. In the background is one of the 1949 BUT 9611T/Roe trolleybuses with several other withdrawn vehicles.

Moving on to the photograph of the five double-deckers, including FKY 24, one minor correction here, this was taken outside the Ritz Cinema, not the Odeon, which was at the bottom of Manchester Road. The ex-London Transport RT is one of 25, which found their way to Bradford in 1958, with a mixture of Park Royal, Saunders and Weymann bodies, and the vehicle at the back on the right, is another of the Regent III/East Lancs batch dating from 1952-1953, similar to the one immediately in front of it.

**Tony Holdsworth, via e-mail**

## BRADFORD RT BUSES

My friend has sent me a copy of Vintage Roadscene for April 2015, as there is a feature on a Bradford corporation bus. Being a Bradford lad, born and bred, I found this item of great interest, as I remember these buses and the scenes in the photographs shown, although they show scenes when I was 'nobbut' a little lad.

Please may I point out that the cinema shown in photograph no 5 is 'The Ritz', which was at the end of Broadway, the 'Odeon' cinema was a short walk away, in Manchester Road.

I former London Transport bus can also be seen in the picture. I remember Bradford buying a number of these and repainting them in Bradford's colours.

Please find enclosed a couple of photographs of what I believe is the only preserved London bus in Bradford colours. They were taken in Bradford on the occasion of the 40th Anniversary of Metro, the passenger transport authority which covers West Yorkshire.

**R Banyard, Bradford**



## MAGAZINES FOR DRIVERS

Regarding Malcolm Bates' article 'Publish and be Damned' and the point about the driver's perspective, I have seen a collection of BMC Drivers Club magazines from the early 1960s, belonging to my uncle. These were aimed purely at drivers of BMC's commercial vehicles, from light vans upwards, and included profiles of individual drivers, articles on the law, insurance schemes, and more general articles. Of course, they promoted BMC's products, but that was the point, and it was

not overdone. A 1964 edition reported 113,000 members, and there were articles on very well-attended and organised branch meetings and dinners. I would imagine the Bedford Drivers Club worked on the same lines.

If a driver wanted the union perspective I expect the TGWU and other unions had their own journals; hopefully they were better quality than the GMB magazine I get nowadays.

I am not familiar with the paid-for magazines, but the trade and fleet journals of today that I have seen do not look at things from the driver's perspective

either. It is all about how to control the driver (or should I say something like "support him to be safe") through ever more intrusive telematics, the training industry and other monitoring. They do cover how the vehicles behave, as well as the costs and legislative compliance, but given that they are aimed at 'decision-makers', I suppose you should not expect the emphasis to be any different.

I really enjoyed the Luton pictorial article in the same edition, it evoked lots of memories of riding in and unloading these vehicles in

the 1970s and 1980s, some of the same names too like Rest Assured, Slumberland and Vono.

Pete Foster's mention of being pulled out of a cab rang some bells. I remember being treated with similar albeit verbal discourtesy on a few occasions right up until teenage years, although the same bullies would be all sweetness and light if you were with your dad. It made me mindful not to discriminate against children in my later years, especially when I was in retail sales.

**Quentin Gallagher,  
Waterlooville, Hampshire**



## SOUTHDOWN SCENE

I was interested to see the 1930s view of Southdown's Pevensey Road, Eastbourne Bus Station in the May issue of *Vintage Roadscene*. Readers may like to know that, as the accompanying photograph shows, the building is still in existence, albeit somewhat rebuilt (the circular window is the giveaway). Until recently it was in use as a nightclub called 'The Nuthouse', but this has now closed. Maybe it could reopen as a home for aged bus enthusiasts, haunted every night by the ghostly sound of long-gone PD3s and Guy Arabs....?

I took a couple of photos of it as it is now. I tried to get one from the same angle, but the sun was in the wrong position. I'm sending it anyway, together with one from the other side.

**Glyn Kraemer-Johnson, via e-mail**



## THE WHEEL FELL OFF

I've been sifting through old photographs again, and wondered if you might be interested in the attached photos, taken in 1984?

I was on my way home from work one evening, when I came across this Alder Valley Series 1 Bristol VR (FBL 112K) in Guildford. It is in the post-MAP

branding for 'Downsman' and based at Hindhead depot. It appears one of the nearside rear wheels came off, as it approached the town centre. The wheel was leaning against the wall near the police car. The 'Downsman' Leyland National has come from Hindhead to assist, but it was necessary to bring the AEC Matador from

Aldershot to recover the Bristol and take it on a suspended tow back to Hindhead.

I don't know the history behind the Matador; Aldershot and District bought two and one of them, No 32 (re-numbered 1052 by Alder Valley) running on trade plates, 141 AA, lasted into NBC days but this isn't it, as 1052 was withdrawn about 1980. This one

is on trade plates, 650 PC. Note the jam sandwich police car in the background. The convoy is seen on the old A3 at Milford, en route to Hindhead.

There couldn't have been much wrong with the VR, as I saw the same bus in Godalming a couple of days later.

**John Raggett,  
Meopham, Kent.**





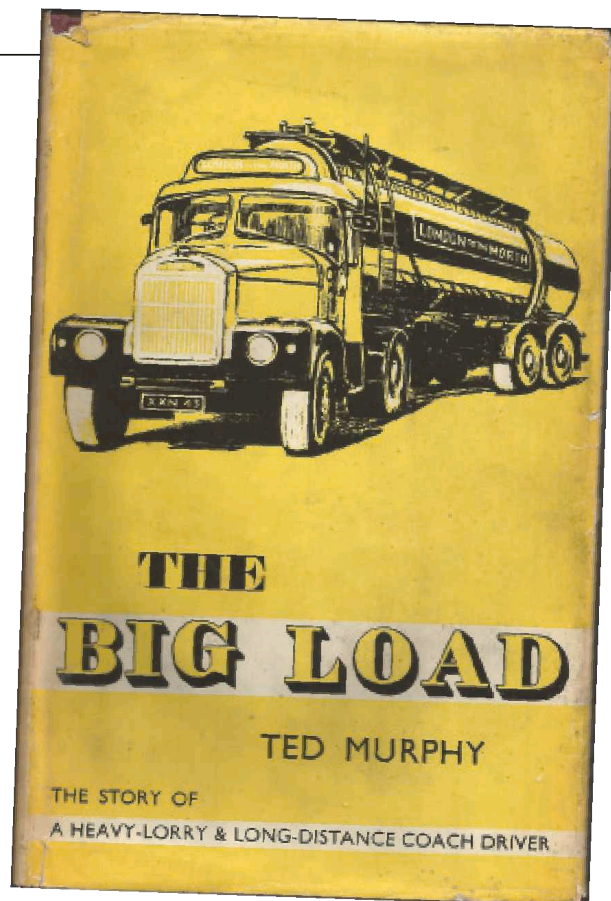
## A NICE ANACHROMISM

I saw this newly-restored LDV Pilot van (what most of us would still think of as a Leyland Sherpa) finished in British Railways livery, parked up at Haworth Station on the Worth Valley Railway. I have no further information, but doesn't it look nice?

Roy Dodsworth, via e-mail



*How can something be so wrong and yet look so right? This just shows how nice a classic livery like this can look on anything. Should we start a campaign to bring back all those lovely old colour schemes?*



## THE BIG LOAD

We have heard from Bill Berry and another reader, Mr Johns, who has a copy of the book referred to on page 35 of the April issue by Malcolm Bates. It's called The Big Load by Ted Murphy, price 10/6, first published in 1963.

As it happens, now that they mention it, I also have a copy of the book, seen here, and a very good read it is, too. Mine was originally priced at 18/6, but I paid £2.50 for it some years back...

## MENZIES VAN IN IRELAND

Reading through the February 2015 issue, I see on page 38 a night-time photo of some John Menzies vans in Edinburgh, including DSG 951C, a BMC FG 4 ton box van.

I thought you might be interested to see another photo of DSG, later in its life. This was taken in College Court, off Castle Street, Belfast, at C Porter & Co's (taken over by John Menzies in the early 1960s) garage.



Until this date (about 1966), the English newspapers had been brought to Northern Ireland by ship, namely the Heysham-Belfast ferry, arriving in Belfast about 07.00, for sorting and onward transmission to NI. It was then decided to start an airlift from Speke airport with the Manchester dailies, scheduled to arrive at Aldergrove from about 03.00, and with the London dailies, which usually arrived about 01.00.

The Speke flights used anything from four to six Dakota aircraft (depending on the size of the papers that day) of Cambrian Airways, while the Londons came on the scheduled BEA passenger flight, Viscounts and latterly a Vanguard, if I remember rightly.

The bulk supplies were taken to a hangar in the middle of Aldergrove airport, where they were sorted into runs and loaded onto the vans, the vans being usually loaded by 03.00-03.30. Very hectic, as you might imagine! Under normal conditions the whole of NI was covered by about 09.00. However 'normal' is only a relative term, with bad weather (particularly fog), breakdowns and latterly civil commotion (for want of two better words!), to hold things up.

John Menzies bought a fleet of brand new 2, 4 and 5 ton BMC FG vans to service this work, which was carried out in partnership with Eason's, the other NI newspaper wholesaler.

However, for whatever reason, the old DSG 951C was brought over from Edinburgh to join the other new FGs. It had C Porter's name on the headboard, but this was changed to Menzies soon after. Geordie Lister drove it, and can be seen third from the left, with myself second from left, in front of 4237 PZ, one of the new five-tonners..

Ted West, via e-mail



## MORE SEDDONS

Further to the publication of the Seddon book, it mentioned on page 97, with John Ward's Seddon 32-4, TCH 615L, that the vehicle was not pictured in the Ken Thomas livery it carried later. With a bit of luck, I have found the one seen here.

This tractor unit was originally operated by BRS, on the Pedigree Petfood contract, out of Melton Mowbray, and its fleet number designated it not to be back-loaded at any time.

Something else that missed the net was a Seddon 25 cwt dropside, to go with the van on page 95. The photo was supplied by Douglas Weir of Leicester, so I must have worked on it at some time.

It was operated by A J Fowkes of Thurmaston, near Leicester, who had previously operated an REO Speedwagon. The 25 cwt was rescued from a scrapyard and renovated by Bill Carter of Thurmaston.

On the subject of 'Bye Bye Earls Court', there was an incident on the Seddon diesel stand, when a visitor got into the cab of a Seddon and pressed the starter button, still with it in gear, and it leapt forward on the stand, but luckily, nobody was hurt. The cabs were locked and batteries disconnected thereafter...

**Colin Chesterman, Groby, Leicester**



### JOHNSTONE'S LITTLE GEMS

Glyn Kromer-Johnson looks at the history of these miniature coaches.

A... The first of the Johnstone's Little Gems was built in 1931 by Johnstone's of London. It was a small, open-top car, built on a chassis from a 1931 Ford. The car was built for the purpose of being used as a miniature coach, and it was the first of a series of similar cars that were built over the years. The cars were built in a variety of colors, including green, red, and blue, and they were often used for advertising purposes. The Johnstone's Little Gems were built in a variety of sizes, from small cars to larger coaches, and they were often used for advertising purposes. The Johnstone's Little Gems were built in a variety of colors, including green, red, and blue, and they were often used for advertising purposes.

## BOURNEMOUTH'S LITTLE GEMS

The article on Johnstone's Little Gems was most interesting and brought back memories of a similar vehicle, or possibly vehicles, which I saw running around Bournemouth as publicity coaches during the late 1950s/early 1960s. It or they ran along the main roads with a driver, but never with any children as passengers. I am certain one belonged to Excelsior European Motorways and possibly another to Charles Cars. I wonder if any of your readers could shed any more light on these for me please.

**John Hypher, Chelmsford**

*Anybody else remember the Johnstone's mini-coaches in Bournemouth?*

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## MORE SWAP-BODIES

Thoroughly enjoyed the article on 'Swap-Body' vehicles in last month's Vintage Roadscene. When I worked for Associated Biscuits (ABL), as a vehicle fitter at the Belvedere Depot, we changed to swap-bodies in 1975. From a fitter's point of view, they were great, as we had Bedford TKs in the fleet and when they were in for service/ repair, it gave so much more access without a body on.

The other factor was that, if a vehicle broke down on route, we used to go out with another unit and change over the body at the side of the road (including motorways), in order that the driver could continue with his deliveries. Another thing that H&S would have stopped now.

The system that we had was the Ablematic Air Bellows type. The front end was raised first and then the rear. Once lowered onto the chassis,



the body was secured by four twist-locks. The vehicles had to have a bigger output air compressor fitted, to compensate for this type of system, and had a large air cylinder fitted on the side of the chassis.

We had a yard shunter vehicle to manoeuvre the bodies around the depot for loading and this was an old TK with a hydraulic lift platform



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Part of the fleet of Abelmatic swap bodies now used by Associated Biscuits at their Belvedere depot, Kent

and it used to pick up the complete body as it stood and just took the body to the loading area and later to the parking area ready for the next days delivery.

I have numerous memories of the time we had these and most are funny but fortunately we never had any major accidents. I hope that the attached photos may be of use to you. The final one is of

one of our Leyland Boxers with body affixed and also in our new livery of Nabisco Group. Please contact me if you require any more stories that you may be able to abridge for any publication.

**Ron Waghorne, Welling, Kent**

*Stories to abridge, eh – I can hardly wait to see them, and I'm sure they would be of interest to other readers...*



## FABULOUS FORDS

Malcolm's Brooklands feature was great and the 1939 Ford Motor Show photo was sensational. Have you got any more taken at that event? All the British and American-derived models seem to be

there. It prompted me to find this photo of a late-surviving breakdown based on a 'Barrel-nose' Ford from around 1939. This was taken one evening in July 1967, in Cray Road (A224) near Crittalls Corner, Sidcup. Sorry it's so grainy. If

this vehicle was fitted with the 30hp V8, it would have been a '91C'. A barrel-nosed panel van can be seen between a 91A Woody and a model 61/88W lorry in the centre of the picture in Malcolm's article.

**Allan Bedford, via e-mail**



## REAL SERVICE

With reference to your special feature 'Bye Bye Earls Court', I was driving a new Thornycroft eight-wheeler from Nottingham to Kingston on Thames, with a load of coal slurry. On the way down the M1, I had two injector pipes blow.

I drove to Earls Court and down the ramp, under the hall. I found the service vehicles, parked up and took the lift onto the Thornycroft stand. I was looking at an eight-wheeled chassis-cab and the salesman was saying what a good vehicle it was.

I said: "Yes, but what about the after-sales service?" He said it was very good, with agents and depots all over England. I said: "OK, I have an eight-wheeler down below with two injector pipes blown."

He didn't bat an eye-lid, picked up the phone to a Thornycroft depot in South London and told me to come back in an hour and a half.

I did and he said that the lorry was fixed and ready to go – and no charge...

Happy days!

**Brian Tebbutt,  
Mountsorrel, Leicestershire**

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# Up the Revolution!

**W**ell, the Scammell Mechanical Horse was something of a revolution in the early 1930, and it could turn (revolution - geddit?) in less than its own length - something no other road vehicle has ever bettered, to my knowledge.

Of course, some care was needed with this manoeuvre, especially with a load at the front of a trailer. I can remember the driver

of a Seddon 32-4 trying to turn in a tight space at British Waterways' Enfield depot in the mid-1970s, and the trailer pin coming out of the fifth-wheel. Red faces all round, not least from the efforts with two fork-lift trucks to hold the trailer while it was all put to rights. Mind you, the hand-brake lever on my little Bedford TK had just come off in my hand, so I wasn't laughing - but that's another story.

I also once knew a chap who worked for British Railways in his 'holidays' from university in the 1960s. He was sent out with a Scammell Scarab on deliveries - yes, "Got a licence, son? Off you go then..." - and, needless to say, had a couple of scares when overdoing the U-turns...

But back to the Scammell, as the 1933 advert said, the Mechanical Horse was already being widely adopted by railway companies and other large transport users, who saw the advantages of multiple trailers, manoeuvrability and, above all, no need for stabling or feed for the real horses.

The other advert from the London, Midland and Scottish Railway talks of 19,000 motor and horse-drawn vehicles, which not only undertook deliveries from the railhead, but also undertook 'door-to-door transport by road, where rail services were not required', taking about the LMS 'Country Lorry Service', using 'up-to-date motor floats'.

The Mechanical Horse and later Scarab and Townsman had a good run of the best part of 40 years on urban deliveries, until worries about braking and stability decreed that four wheels on a tractor unit were a better bet. These days, it's all Sprinter vans bringing our parcels, which haven't made the trunk haul on the railways either...

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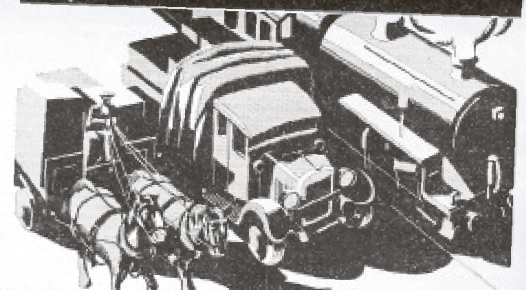
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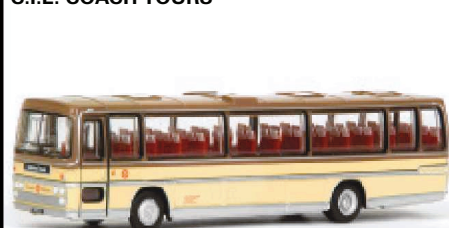
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